

WEEKLY FREE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR



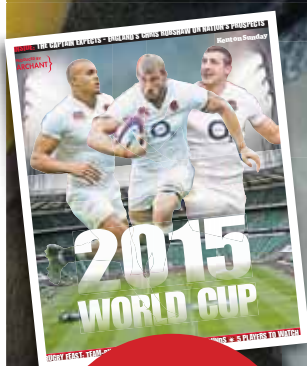
EDF ENERGY London and South of England Media Awards

FREE

Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk September 13, 2015

Mid edition No 677



INSIDE:
16-page
guide to
RWC

HEALTH

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Will patients soon be
heading to Calais?

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Ann Barnes: Will she run for re-election?

PCC seems increasingly
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Why we shouldn't keep playing the blame game

PERSONAL responsibility is a message so often overlooked in our society.

We are, for the most part, too quick to point a finger of blame at an organisation or individual than actually consider the role we personally could play in making situations better.

And perhaps there is no better example of that than in our schools.

Exam results not quite up to scratch? Blame the teachers. Behaviour an issue? Blame the teachers.

And it's an easy argument to make; after all the common perception is of a working life which finishes at 3.30pm and has a more than generous amount of holiday. The reality, of course, is completely different.

But while the teachers have a responsibility to each child, they do not have a responsibility to sculpt the child entirely. That is, and always

should be, the role of the parent.

The problem today is that the parent is too quick too to assume any failing is nothing to do with them and everything to do with the educational establishment.

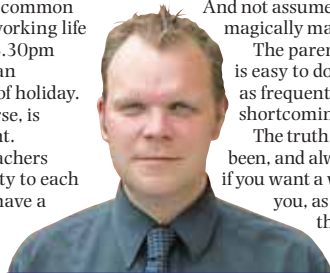
Behaviour issues in particular - almost without exception the biggest complaint from teachers - should be a collaborative effort between teacher and parent.

But the parents need to remember their responsibility; to bring up polite, well-mannered, thoughtful children.

And not assume it somehow magically materialises.

The parental responsibility is easy to dodge but should be as frequently criticised as any shortcomings of our schools.

The truth, as it always has been, and always will be, is that if you want a well rounded child you, as a parent, should be the one to deliver that and take responsibility for.



Editor **Chris Britcher**

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Every penny of the £2m generated by sale of mansion in Medway will go to good cause



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Celebrating her long reign on the throne

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Fury over latest 'woeful' blood scandal briefing

By Chris Britcher

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A LEADING campaigner in the fight for justice for those infected by contaminated blood supplies in the 1970s and 80s has slammed the latest delay tactics by government officials.

Public health minister Jane Ellison this week addressed a debate in Westminster Hall at the House of Commons, but hopes of news of when a promised consultation will begin, or details of compensation pay-outs were once again conspicuous by their absence.

And that left Broadstairs' Steve Dymond, 59, fuming.

The former teacher was infected with hepatitis C after taking contaminated blood products to treat haemophilia. It has subsequently caused sclerosis of the liver.

He was one of thousands to fall victim to a scandal, which saw the NHS use contaminated blood – often sourced from prisoners and drug takers in the US. Many others were also infected with HIV. The NHS knew of the risks but ignored them initially, leading to many others becoming infected. It is thought all haemophiliacs during



BLOW: Steve Dymond says this week's announcement was another major blow to those seeking justice

the era were infected. Many thousands have subsequently died.

But despite an apology from the prime minister earlier this year, victims are still fighting for fair levels of compensation for illnesses which have left them stricken. And hopes this week to see progress were dashed when MP Mrs Ellison said no date for a consultation had been set, or any decision on pay-outs. She did, however, say there would be "root and branch"

changes to the current system of hand-outs.

But Mr Dymond said the inaction was just another kick in the face for sufferers. He said: "The government's response was woeful in its lack of concrete detail proposed – the urgency and priority declared by the prime minister now drags on to Christmas and the years beyond.

"As Jane Ellison read out the words given to her by her officials, her cheerful smile in the light of such hu-

man devastation this scandal has caused, betrayed the full extent of her and her department's contempt for the 7,500 victims.

"Her assertion this was an urgent priority and received her utmost attention, belied the fact that in over three years she has produced nothing worthwhile or of substance. This latest obfuscation can only intensify the deep feelings of hurt within this fragile and vulnerable community."

Conference on 11-plus exam at County Hall as Medway pupils sit test

A MAJOR conference examining the pros and cons of the 11-plus in the county will take place in Maidstone next month.

The event will look at both the Kent Test and the Medway Test – which Year 6 pupils will be sitting this week.

Taking place on October 21 at County Hall, the week after Kent Test results will be mailed out, the conference is open to parents, school governors, teacher and tutors.

It hopes by bringing together stakeholders in the exam process, a discussion can be had about its future direction.

Among the issues to be debated will be the revisions to the Kent Test to make the exam more 'tutor proof', the appeal process to grammar schools, and alternatives to test, with at least five grammars now setting their own tests as an additional way of qualifying.

Among those attending will be independent education advisor and

former headteacher Peter Read; Matthew Bartlett, head of Dover Grammar School for Girls; Emma Hickling, executive headteacher of a group of schools in Maidstone and education consultant and appeal administrator Marylyn Atkins.

The 11 Plus Kent Test Conference runs from 5pm to 7.30pm and is part of a number of events as part of the National Tutoring Conference – a series of events staged around the UK.

Designed to encourage open discussion around key themes, there is also the expectation of there being opportunities to put questions and get advice from both Mr Read and Ms Atkins, in particular, on school admissions and appeals.

Tickets are available from the organisers at www.nationaltutoring-conference.org.uk.

The event is supported by Kent on Sunday. Proceeds will be donated to the youth mental health charity Charlie Waller Memorial Trust.

MP: Road's become Britain's 'worst stretch of motorway'

DARTFORD MP Gareth Johnson has slammed the changes to the Dartford Crossing, saying the stretch of road has become "Britain's worst stretch of motorway".

Speaking in the House of Commons on Thursday, the Conservative MP said the removal of the toll-booths – with all crossings now paid for remotely – had failed to prove a success.

He told MPs: "The approach to the Dartford Crossing on the M25 has become Britain's worst stretch of motorway. The free-flow system has clearly failed to live up to expectations leading to horrendous traffic jams in the area."

For more on this story and why Mr Johnson may have chosen now to highlight the issue, see story inside.

Five prison officers injured after violence at Sheppey jail

AN INVESTIGATION is under way following an incident on Monday night which left five prison officers injured.

Trouble flared at HMP Swaleside on Sheppey – although officials at the Ministry of Justice insist it was swiftly resolved and order restored.

However, it is just the latest incident at the prison which, in the past, has complained of too few staff. In October, an officer was

attacked with a 'bladed weapon' while a recent report said a 'violence reduction policy' needed to be 'rigorously implemented.'

The officers were given treatment for minor injuries, and six of Swaleside's inmates were moved from the prison.

The prison houses 1,112 prisoners who are serving four years or more.



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Parking team to chase dropped kerb blockers

A DISTRICT council will be dishing out parking fines to anyone reported to have parked across dropped kerbs outside homes.

Previously, occupants who found their drives blocked could call the police, but now those in Sevenoaks can call the council's parking services team and ask for a civil enforcement officer to come out.

Matthew Dickens, the district council's cabinet member for parking, said "This service will benefit our residents whose lives are blighted by a minority of inconsiderate and selfish drivers who block access to their properties.

"At the same time we will take a common sense approach to applying this policy."



FIRE: Old Tannery ablaze

MP calls for changes after city inferno

CANTERBURY MP Julian Brazier is calling on the government to change its building regulations following the inferno which engulfed city centre flats earlier this summer.

The fire on the Old Tannery development ripped through 30 homes during a hot Saturday afternoon.

Remarkably, no one was hurt.

But it raised concerns over just how the fire in a relatively new development was able to spread so fast and burn so fiercely.

The Conservative MP met with Lewis Sidnick from the National House Building Council (NHBC) to discuss fire safety regulations this week.

During the meeting, it was confirmed the NHBC were not involved in setting the standards for the construction of The Old Tannery.

NHBC did however offer to take an active role in investigating potential improvements to government fire safety regulations.

The MP said: "Considering the materials used and the construction meeting regulatory standards, it appears that the problem lies with the government regulations. NHBC are keen to help and I appreciate their offer to conduct some research into this incident. Hopefully, this will help avoid further such incidents."

Geldof calls government approach to solving the refugee crisis 'inadequate'

By Kerri-Ann Roper

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LIVE Aid hero Bob Geldof has branded the Government's response to the refugee crisis in the Mediterranean, Middle East and Europe as "inadequate".

The Boomtown Rats frontman's intervention came after David Cameron announced the UK would resettle up to 20,000 refugees over the next five years – a response criticised by the Archbishop of Canterbury as "very slim".

Speaking at the GQ Men of the Year Awards, where he was presenting chancellor George Osborne with the politician of the year award, Mr Geldof said: "It can't be a numbers game. I don't understand when you say 20,000 over five years, I don't know how that works out."

He stressed that he thought "it has to be a game of empathy and kindness" and ended saying "you could probably do a lot better on that issue".

Last week, Mr Geldof offered to house three Syrian refugee families



CRISIS: Bob Geldof

as his home in Faversham – and another at his London flat.

Mr Osborne took to the stage and described Geldof as "the guy who introduced my generation to the challenges of poverty in sub-Saharan Africa".

He went on to say: "I think, what's going on now on our TV screens as we see that tragedy unfolding and the way we are going to do more to direct many hundreds of millions pounds more to help those people and give them a home."

Meanwhile, south east MEP Janice Atkinson has said Europe should wash its hands of the migrant crisis and that other Middle East countries should shoulder the burden.

Mrs Atkinson was originally elected as a Ukip MEP in May 2014, but has subsequently been booted out of the party after a scandal over an expenses claim.

Now standing as an independent, she lined up alongside Marine Le Pen – leader of France's far right National Front party – at a press conference in Strasbourg to discuss the migration crisis facing Europe.

She said: "A man who leaves Syria may be a refugee at the start of the journey. When he is illegally living in Calais and illegally attempting to enter Britain, he is an economic migrant and an illegal immigrant."

Farmers join police in fighting rural crime

A HIGH visibility crackdown on rural crime across the North Downs took place this week as police teamed up with farmers and villagers in a bid to make the countryside safer.

The patrols were aimed at deterring would-be offenders and provide crime prevention advice to the rural community.

Landowners and other residents who attended an earlier briefing were also provided with a dedicated mobile telephone number, allowing them to be the eyes and ears of the operation by reporting suspicious activity and providing valuable intelligence to officers.

As part of the push, a number of people were arrested or quizzed over various offences, including a 61-year-old man who was found sleeping in a car in Otterden with eight dogs. He was reported to the RSPCA over the condition of the animals. Officers also issued tickets to a number of motorists caught speeding on the A20 at Harrietsham.

MEP demands fairer deal for our fishermen

EURO MP Catherine Bearder is calling on the government to reallocate fishing quotas to protect small-scale fishing fleets after visiting fishermen in Whitstable.

Fishing quotas limit the amount and type of fish that can be taken from the water, as a means to regulate fishing to cut waste and stop overfishing in European waters.

The EU has set regulations in European waters because fish stocks for certain species were hugely depleted. But it is down to the UK government to decide how to allocate the quotas across the regions and for different sizes of boats. Many smaller fishing boats believe they are overlooked due to large vessels.

The Lib Dem MEP said: "Meeting Whitstable fishermen today has once again highlighted the plight facing small-scale fishermen who are an integral part of our coastal communities.

"I will be writing to the fishing minister to call for quotas to be allocated more fairly to protect smaller fleets."

'Loving family man' killed in A2 smash

THE family of a father-of-four, killed in an horrific crash on the A2 last Sunday have paid tribute to him.

Motorcyclist Andrew Beane, 51, from Sittingbourne, was killed in Bapchild after being hit by a silver Volkswagen Jetta just after 10am.

In a statement, his family said: "He was a loving family man and a hard working father of four. Andrew was also a husband and a grandfather of four who loved his dog.

"He loved both watching and playing football and he had many friends. He will be sorely missed especially by his family and all who knew him."

The crashed happened at the junction with Hempstead Lane, when his blue and silver Suzuki motorcycle was travelling along the A2 in the direction of Teynham.

Officers would like to speak to anyone who saw the collision, or who saw either the motorcycle or the car beforehand. Witnesses who have not yet spoken to police are asked to contact the serious collision investigation unit on 01622 798538.

Pilot unhurt as Spitfire forced to make crash landing in field

By Jamie Weir

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THE pilot of a Second World War Spitfire has walked away without serious injury after he was forced to make an emergency landing in a field near Ashford on Monday.

Fire crews and paramedics were called to the scene in Woodchurch, at 10am after receiving a report that the vintage aircraft had come down.

The pilot, former RAF mechanic Rob Davies, had already managed to get out of the plane by the time the emergency services arrived at the scene. He later said the plane had suffered engine failure shortly after taking off from his landing strip nearby.

The propellers were broken and one of the wings ripped off as a result of the crash.

A South East Coast Ambulance Service spokeswoman said that an air ambulance, ambulance and heart unit were scrambled and the pilot was treated at the scene but did not need to be taken to hospital.

She said: "A number of resources were sent to the scene but thankfully the pilot was not seriously injured. He only suffered minor injuries and was treated at the scene and was not taken to hospital."

A Kent Fire and Rescue Service spokesman said that there were no further casualties



TOUCHDOWN: Moment Spitfire came down in a field in village close to Ashford

ties and officers remained at the scene to ensure the area was safe by dealing with a leak of aviation fuel.

He said: "Emergency services were called to an incident involving a Spitfire plane, following an emergency landing in a field in Woodchurch, near Ashford."

"The pilot was already out of the plane when fire crews arrived. He was assessed by paramedics at the scene. There are no further casualties and the cause of the crash is not yet known."

Witness Liz King posted on Twitter: "Plane down Woodchurch, Ashford pilot OK" and added "looks repairable".

She told KoS: "I was in the house when I heard the plane come down. It sort of spluttered then went quiet, then I heard a noise before it landed. It was obviously a good landing, as it didn't make a loud bang, or a big noise. It must have taken a lot of skill for the pilot to put it down that well."

"He seemed to be fine, and was out of the plane quickly after it had landed."

Coping with demand for foster parents

AN ONLINE foster care event takes place this Thursday in a bid to boost numbers in order to cope with the rise in unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

Taking place on the Kent fostering website, it starts at 7pm and will tackle some of the challenges the youngsters bring with them.

To find out more and to join in, visit the website www.kentfostering.co.uk.

Kings Ferry launches commuter service

COACH firm The Kings Ferry has launched a commuter service ferrying workers from Maidstone to London.

The Gillingham-based firm, which will drop off at Canary Wharf, Fenchurch Street and the Millennium Bridge, already runs a number of other Kent commuter services.

Injury unit taken over

FAVERSHAM Medical Practice has taken over the running of the Faversham Minor Injuries Unit.

It follows a decision by the NHS Canterbury and Coastal Clinical Commissioning Group after examining various options for the unit.

Simon Perks of the CCG said: "Collaborative working and a community spirit has resulted in a health facility that Faversham can be proud of."



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Could road rage killer Noye be released by end of year?

THE road rage killer Kenneth Noye will find out if he will be released from jail within two weeks.

The 68-year-old, from West Kingsdown, stabbed electrician Stephen Cameron, 21 (pictured left), to death in an apparent road rage attack in 1996 on a slip road of the M25 at Swanley.

Mr Cameron was killed in front of his girlfriend after getting into a fight with Noye (pictured, right).

He went on the run after the murder, but was captured in Spain in 1998 and jailed for life with a minimum tariff of 16 years in 2000.

The Parole Board confirmed that it had held a hearing to consider his release this week.

A spokesman added that no decision would be made until September 22.



If successful, Noye could be released on licence from Wayland Prison, Norfolk, by the end of the year.

Noye had been due to be granted hearings earlier this year but these were cancelled.



Career criminal Noye had earlier stabbed to death an undercover officer outside his mock Tudor mansion after the £26 million Brink's-Mat bullion heist but successfully pleaded self-defence.

Tigers roar across US in bid to raise charity funds

A TEAM of cyclists are continuing a gruelling ride across the US this weekend in a 3,000 mile bid to raise cash for charity.

The team, made up from the Friends of the Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment (PWRR) – previously based at Howe Barracks, Canterbury – began their trek on Monday, travelling from the east to west coast of the States.

They expect to take 14 days, riding in continuous 24-hour relay, to complete the route, which crosses the Appalachian Mountains and the Mojave Desert.

The team, known as the Tigers, are all past members of the regiment.

The Ride to Recovery is raising funds for the PWRR Benevolent Fund.

Among the cyclists is Sergeant Jay Baldwin, who lost both his

legs after falling victim to an improvised explosive device (IED) during his second tour of Afghanistan. Since then he had been in constant pain and has had to rely on a wheelchair.

However earlier this year Sgt Baldwin underwent a pioneering new procedure known as osseointegration, which works by creating a structural link between the contact point of the leg and a titanium-based implant.

Thanks to the efforts of the Friends of the PWRR, Sgt Baldwin became only the third Britain to receive this groundbreaking procedure.

A spokesman said: "They will cover between 200–300 miles a day, to help the care we can offer to those who may face similar circumstances as a result of serving their country."

Spitfire rolls in to town

A REPLICA Spitfire aircraft will visit Dartford town centre on Tuesday.

The MK805, which contains all genuine Spitfire parts in its cockpit, will be on display in the High Street, close to Bell Corner, from 9am to 6pm. It is part of the town's Battle of Britain Day commemorations.

Hovercraft is rescued

LIFEBOAT crews had to come to the aid of a stricken hovercraft on Monday.

The craft, which had broken down, was found close to Otterham Quay by the Sheerness inshore lifeboat team.

It was towed back to Gillingham Strand by 6.30pm.

JLS star opens new club

FORMER JLS star and co-presenter of BBC TV show The Voice, Marvin Humes, will be performing at a Canterbury night club on Friday.

He will DJ at the launch party for the Steinbeck & Shaw nightspot in St George's Place after a £150,000 re-fit.

GP in TV's Hunted show

A GP from Dover is one of the stars of Channel 4's much-hyped new TV show Hunted.

Ricky Allen worked at the Dover Medical Practice before taking part in the show which sees contestants pursued for five weeks, being tracked by experts.



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Top Three Stories



1. Spitfire crashes in field

Drama unfolds in village close to Ashford

2. Pupils sit the Kent Test

Year 6 children hope for grammar spot

3. Noye to be freed?

Road rage killer gets Parole Board hearing

The Essential Guide:



...to Dreamland

Look back at its chequered history



FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: The Queen marked a milestone as the nation's longest serving monarch in a muted manner this week. You can see more photographs and hear tributes to her from Kent's leaders inside this week's edition.

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Top Three Blogs



1. Facebook on the brink?

Is social media giant becoming uncool to 'like'?

2. Labour's two faces

After leadership vote is it time for a split?

3. How to spend a jackpot

Easy of splashing out a lottery big prize

Results of the *Kent News* online poll

Should Ann Barnes stand for re-election as PCC?

- 1 Yes - 7%
- 2 No - 62%
- 3 Undecided - 2%
- 4 No, PCCs should be scrapped - 29%



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Oo-la-la: Anger over deal to ship patients to new Calais hospital



CALAIS: A contract is being finalised which will give those requiring treatment the chance to avoid waiting lists and have their surgery at a state-of-the-art hospital at the French port town

Is this the road to easing the waiting lists at hospitals in the east of the county or proof of NHS crisis?

By Jamie Weir

PLANS for patients in Kent to be offered medical treatment at a state-of-the-art new hospital in France paid for by the NHS have provoked anger from campaigners who claim it is another clear sign that our health service needs urgent increased funding.

The plans would see patients from the Shepway, Dover and Deal areas of the county able to choose to take the trip over the English Channel to get faster treatment at a new super-hospital – called Centre Hospitalier de Calais.

Patients would have to pay for their own transport to and from the French port town, but the bill for all treatment would be picked up by the NHS.

The hospital has spare capacity due to being ‘future-proofed’ for an expected rise in the local population.

But while the demand is low for now, it is hoping to secure a contract with local health chiefs in Kent to help ease pressure on our hospitals.

Patients will not be forced to go to Calais for treatment – but if they agree it could mean them getting treatment far quicker than joining the back of local waiting lists.

Despite that, campaigners like Dr Paul Hobday – a retired GP who stood for the National Health Action Party during May’s general election – say the plans are nothing more than a short term fix, disguising a far

bigger underlying problem. He told KoS: “This new initiative is nothing more than an admission of complete failure. If patients are having to be shuttled to Calais to get treatment, it shows that the infrastructure just doesn’t exist to treat people in Kent and there is only one way to improve that – with better funding for the NHS.”

The plans have been proposed by the NHS South Kent Coast Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

The CCG’s accountable officer, Hazel Carpenter, said that the proposals would be optional for patients.

She said: “We recently invited organisations that provide treatments including general surgery, gynaecology, cataract surgery, pain management and orthopaedics to apply to us if they were interested in treating South Kent Coast patients.

“Two French providers applied as well as a number of English ones.

“We carried out a careful assessment of the services they offer and are visiting the sites. The two French providers, among others, fulfilled our criteria and we expect to finalise a contract with them.

“It will then be possible for patients who need this treatment to choose to have it in France if they wish, after discussion with their GPs. The NHS will pay for their medical treatment but patients will pay their own travel and other incidental costs.

“It is purely a matter of choice and we will be very interested to see how many people take it up and what feedback they give us.”

The hospital itself has a total of 502 beds – many in private rooms.

A spokesman from the hospital said: “The aim of the hospital is to open its doors to a wider public audience both to the residents of Calais and also its European neighbours.”

Language barriers shouldn’t be an issue either, with the spokesman saying that intensive courses had been provided. It was backed up by the CCG which said: “The French hospitals are required to ensure that all staff dealing directly with NHS patients undergo English language training.

“It is also a requirement of the contract that any patient literature and information is translated into English, before any NHS patients are treated and that discharge letters and the care plan in English are sent to the patient and GP within two days of the patient being discharged from hospital.”

Simon Bolton is the healthcare spokesman for the public sector union, Unison. He said that when the new system was announced, he thought it must have been a joke.

He said that the CCG was likely to have looked into the Calais hospital out of desperation.

He said: “It’s no great secret that government’s target of 18-week waiting times have been broken left, right and centre. It’s also no secret that the east Kent trust, from which many patients would be drawn for this service, is facing a £40 million black hole in its finances.

“The CCG is being forced down this path of creeping privatization, with money going to organisations other

than the NHS because of a lack of funding to actually provide good services.”

The CCG though disagrees, stating that: “The CCG contracts with local NHS hospitals based on the amount of treatment they are able to provide. East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust will continue as the main provider of NHS hospital care in east Kent.”

Shepway and Hythe MP, Damian Collins says that – for the short term at least – the proposals are good for patients.

He said: “It does give patients choice, there is no doubt about that. No one will be forced to go to Calais, but can choose to go to get faster treatment if they would like to. That’s good for patients who can choose to make use of the option to go to Calais if they want to.”

Mr Bolton disagrees saying the move isn’t about providing choice for patients.

He told KoS: “We’re not choosing beans at a supermarket, or buying a car. We’re talking about healthcare here, and patients in the south of Kent need to be able to access treatment at their local hospital, not be forced into taking a one-and-a-half-hour ferry trip to get an operation they require.

“There are also significant issues with other parts of the deal. There seems to be little understanding of quite how data sharing on patients would take place, and there is one absolute guarantee – that this will take work away from our hospitals.”

The CCG says though, that data

sharing should not be a problem.

A statement from the CCG said: “The standards for managing and storing patient records will be the same as for UK hospitals and in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act.

“Patients will have access to their medical records in exactly the same way as they have with NHS providers.”

Mr Collins does say that while he believes the new treatment option is a good thing for patients, it should only be thought of a short-term solution.

He says that the CCG needs to examine other ways to deliver services.

He told KoS: “The priority in the longer term is to make more use of community hospitals, and begin delivering more services through them. That’s what I would like to see for my constituents in the future.”

However, Dr Hobday says that there is the potential for problems in the future as a result of using capacity in Calais.

He said: “There is a question mark over what could happen in the future once the Calais hospital’s capacity is taken up. Where will our patients go then? There’s really only one solution to this problem, and that is getting more beds into our own hospitals, and making sure the NHS is well enough funded to work as it is supposed to.”

■ What do you think? Would you go to Calais for treatment? Share your views and join the debate. Write to us at: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP. Or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.



COST: The decision to close the MyFerryLink service saw workers occupy two of the boats - at least one of which has been badly damaged as the pictures of slashed seats and curtains show

Legal fight after French workers cause '£2m' of damage to ferries

Eurotunnel bosses have been left fuming after discovering widespread damage caused to the two boats formerly operated by MyFerryLink which have been occupied in Calais. **Chris Murphy** reports

EUROTUNNEL has slammed French ferry workers as "petty and stupid" for causing up to £2 million worth of damage to a pair of cross-Channel ferries at the centre of a long-running dispute.

The Rodin and Berlioz ferries, previously part of the MyFerryLink fleet, have been stranded at Calais for months after workers in France - fuming over the company's closure - occupied the vessels.

But, during the occupation, seating throughout was slashed, apparently with knives, televisions removed and pictures ripped from walls in a flood of wanton vandalism.

And that means they are unlikely to be back in service until the end of November or even December.

The boats were only liberated ten days ago.

The list of destruction, allegedly carried out while members belonging to French seamen's union, the Syndicat Maritime Nord, occupied the ferries is a long one.

While the structure of the ships was left intact, much of the internal fittings have been destroyed.

And that means Eurotunnel, which bought the ships from former operator SeaFrance and then handed them to a French co-operative to run on a day-to-day basis, is facing picking up a massive repair bill.

Danish firm and cross-Channel operator DFDS has agreed a deal to charter the vessels but only once they are fixed.

However, Eurotunnel says it will pursue the union behind the striking workers to foot the sky-high costs.

The dispute started some time ago when Eurotunnel was, after a long bitter fight, ordered to get rid of its MyFerryLink arm over claims it had an unfair hold on the highly competitive cross-Channel market.

An agreement was then reached to charter the Rodin and Berlioz ferries to DFDS.

With hundreds of members of the SCOP co-operative facing losing their jobs as a consequence, many decided to occupy the ferries.

As a consequence, capacity was reduced and it was one of the contributory factors to Operation Stack being brought into force so often this summer.

It was during this time that Eurotunnel claim the appalling damage was done. And while it carries out the repairs in preparation for handing them over to DFDS, Eurotunnel is preparing an invoice for the French union, Syndicat Maritime Nord, at their headquarters in Calais.

A spokesman for Eurotunnel says his company is furious with the damage and will drag the union into French courts to ensure it pays up.

He said: "We have had a contract with DFDS since the beginning of July which we have not been able to deliver on because they have been occupied."

"Now they have been liberated we have been carrying out the surveys and evaluations of what has happened to them during the two months. There is a certain amount of damage, particularly on the Rodin."

The company then lists what they initially saw during these investigations.

He said: "Someone has gone around

with a knife and cut all the seats, armchairs and benches, plus across all the bars' and restaurants' seating areas.

"They also damage the curtains and blinds, they damaged the walls by pulling framed photos off and by removing televisions, sound equipment.

"They damaged the kitchens, breaking crockery, and removing machinery like dishwashers and so on.

"Smashing up the bars, smashing up the cash registers, so there is a fair amount of damage.

"And also, outside they have let down some of the emergency evacuation chutes and lifeboats. These have a one-time function where they are supposed to be used once during an emergency and then have to be replaced.

"Underneath that, the boats are still sound so where has been no damage to the hulls or engines. They can still operate but there is a lot of cosmetic work that needs to be done before they can come back in to service."

A DFDS spokesman said of its deal with Eurotunnel: "We are to pay for the ships when the charter commences, which will be when the ships have been delivered to us.

"They are now in the process of being delivered from SCOP SeaFrance to Eurotunnel, and once this has been completed, the process for delivering the ships from Eurotunnel to DFDS will begin.

"It is too early to say when this will take place, but as this will be followed by a necessary period in a shipyard for rebranding the ships, we do not expect they will be ready for service before the end of November or early December."

And on the damage, the company said: "This is a matter between SCOP

SeaFrance and Eurotunnel. Our focus is on delivering a robust, efficient and flexible service on the Dover to Calais route. Following last week's agreement, we hope to have a three-ship service in operation on the Calais route by the end of November this year."

The occupation was run by around 600 disgruntled workers and it is believed many lived on board rotating in shifts.

But an appeal from the French transport minister and seemingly endless negotiations finally arrived at a tentative agreement.

The agreement sees DFDS taking on 202 former SCOP-SeaFrance staff in its French organisation and will eventually run six ferries out of Dover - three to Calais and three to Dunkirk.

But the timeline on when that happens remains in the air.

Eurotunnel said: "We are probably

not going to see the boats back in use for a good few weeks yet.

"The damage was done while the boats were still in our ownership - we still own them, we are only chartering them. But the charterer hadn't taken possession of the boats at that time so it will be between us and the union."

The spokesman added: "It is very disappointing that this kind of thing could have been done by professional maritime staff for damaging their means of livelihood.

"It is an extraordinarily stupid and petty thing to do. Why on earth would you do something like that?"

A spokesman for DFDS said: "We are awaiting the handover but do not currently have any time frame. We are aware there has been some damage."

The French union failed to respond to efforts to comment on the claims when contacted by KoS.

ROOT CAUSE OF OPERATION STACK

IT IS easy to forget the troubles at Calais, which sparked Operation Stack for so many days this summer, were caused at first not by migrants breaching security fences, but striking French workers.

Indeed, it was the chaos they caused at the port which led the thousands of migrants gathering in the French port to try and take advantage of the situation in their bid to reach our shores.

Furious at the closure of the MyFerryLink service, the French workers - many of whom had invested considerable personal sums into the co-operative which

ran the service but now faced being out of a job - burnt tyres at the entrance to Eurotunnel and blockaded the port. The result was a backlog of freight which saw the M20 transformed into a lorry park, causing considerable distress to motorists across Kent, and those heading to the Continent.

When the migrants took their opportunity to try and leap onto Eurotunnel trains, the focus swiftly switched from the French industrial dispute to the problems of immigration. The reality is that with the ferries back in service, Stack should be a rarity again.



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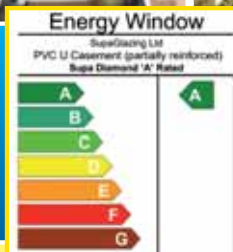
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Barnes defends PCC role but will she stand again?

In the second part of a special focus on the role of the police and crime commissioner, we speak to Ann Barnes who makes a case for the defence

By **Jamie Weir**

ANN Barnes this week refused to confirm or deny to this newspaper whether she will stand for re-election in the role of Kent police and crime commissioner (PCC), as speculation mounts she is to quit ahead of the May 2016 vote.

The refusal to comment by the, at times, controversial figure will come as little surprise to many who feel that her time as the inaugural PCC has long since run out.

The question is whether her handling of the role since she was elected in 2012 has damaged its perception in Kent, or whether the public is able to separate the individual and the office.

Speaking to KoS this week, Mrs Barnes admitted the 'jury was out' on the role of the PCC and whether it had lived up to its original mission to act as the conduit between the public and the serving officers, when unveiled by the Coalition government.

Yet Mrs Barnes – like many others – believes the PCC role has proved itself to be an essential platform and one which is an improvement on the previous police authority model which it replaced.

And she is in perhaps the best position to compare the two, having previously led the Kent Police Authority before deciding to stand for the PCC role.

Despite a miserable 16 per cent turnout, Mrs Barnes' rollercoaster time in office has ensured the majority now have a view on it. Whether it be good or bad.

She told KoS: "While the jury may be out, let's not forget that at the moment the PCC model is the only one in town for the foreseeable future, at least until the 2020 elections.

"If anyone were to ask me which system, the police authority system or the PCC system, is the most effective, I do feel having worked in both that the PCC model gives a sharper and cleaner accountability and a reassurance to local people."

The old police authorities were designed to oversee the police in the background – as an organisation which did not court publicity other than to highlight its role.

A key factor in the creation of the PCC was to create a public figure – one we identified with and could communicate with. Profile was a big factor.

Mrs Barnes said that her office had achieved that task admirably, creating a more direct link between the public and Kent Police. Plenty of others, however, would suggest some high profile PR blunders raised her profile in a negative manner.

She told KoS: "The sheer volume of correspondence we receive compared to the police authority tells you that people know it is there and how to engage. I think PCCs across the country have achieved that shift. I'm also regularly approached by people when I'm out and about who want to discuss policing. Many of them are very positive about the service they receive and grateful for what our police do."

It is something which Kent Police Federation chairman Ian Pointon agrees with. His organisation represents the rank and file officers on the force.

He told KoS that Mrs Barnes' time in office had marked a dramatic shift in the public's ability to connect to the force.

He said: "The police authority had a much lower profile. Currently I'd reckon that quite a few people in Kent would recognise the PCC's name, and face. If you'd asked them what the name of any of the old police authority members was, there would have been blank looks. The PCC is the link between the public and the police. That means people need to know who their point of contact is."

That increase in publicity though, came at a cost to Mrs Barnes, with the constant media glare highlighting problems with certain PCC initiatives, including her highly vaunted youth commissioner role.

She told KoS that: "The negativity of it was very surprising, and the will of many journalists to consistently focus on the negative. But you put that to one side and get on with the job.

"Criticism comes with the territory. It is an elected role and my advice is don't run for election if you aren't prepared for it. People

SUPPORT:
Ian Pointon has turned into a fan of the PCC office





CONVINCED: Mrs Barnes says PCC is an improvement on the police authority which it replaced. Right, Chief Constable Alan Pughesley. Pic ADY KERRY



won't always agree with what you're doing."

That criticism, has at times, been cutting and personal.

Though Mrs Barnes wouldn't be drawn on whether she felt her tenure had led to loss of respect for the force, she did say she had changed tack with her communication strategy.

She told KoS: "I committed to the police and crime panel [which oversees her office] last June that I would put the emphasis more on the work of the office of PCC and that's exactly what I've done. Of course there are many more ways to engage with the public than simply via the traditional media and I've al-

ways embraced those such as public meetings, use of social media and so on."

However, despite the at times painful performances in front of the camera, Mrs Barnes has indeed delivered on the promises she made to the electorate when campaigning for the post.

Community policing – one of her electorates priorities – has been a key focus. The role of the PCC, she told KoS, also meant she was able to do more than the old police authority as well.

She said: "PCCs have new powers, for instance, I exercised one early on

Continued on page 16

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continued from page 15

and called in HMIC – Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary – to undertake an independent review of the force's crime recording, which was found to be wanting."

And she says that the response from the force – and indeed rank and file officers – has been encouraging for her.

She said: "I think the role has been well received. Police officers are probably among the group that understand the role best."

"Dropping numerical targets has gone down very well, trusting them to deliver a quality service, something HMIC have praised us for."

That direct accountability of the force was another guiding reason for the change to the PCC model, with government requiring a slimmed down system of ensuring forces behaved in the manner expected.

Kent Police Federation chief Ian Pointon told KoS that the PCC was better at holding the chief constable to account.

He said: "It makes accountability far more focussed, with the PCC a single point of contact to hold the chief constable to account. That's good, because it cuts down on red tape, and speeds up the whole process. Rather than endless meetings, there's one person who can take the force to task if needed."

It's something Mrs Barnes has done, telling KoS that she has augmented a 'change in culture' at Kent Police during her time in office.

She said: "There has been a culture shift in the force, lead by the chief constable with my 100 per cent support, acknowledged by the Inspectorate as outstanding."

Bureaucracy, according to Mrs Barnes was also a serious problem in the old police authorities. She said that there were "endless committees and a cottage industry of report production on every possible subject" under the old regime. It is a criticism she's not alone in making, with Mr Pointon backing up her claims.

He told KoS that he was a convert to the new PCC system.

He said: "I'm one of those who has changed my mind on the new style PCC. I was very sceptical initially and questioned the point of it when they were first introduced."

"However, after seeing the PCC role in action, I'm now convinced there are a number of advantages over the old system. For one thing, the old police authority was a lot more bureaucratic, with reams of layers, files and subcommittees for everything."

Those layers of bureaucracy have been cut down on by Mrs Barnes, with a cheaper office than the former police authority. And she says that critics who say the money would be better spent on frontline officers are missing the point.

She said: "The police service is a critical public service that spends a vast amount of tax payers' money and there has to be some mechanism for how the money is spent and how the service performs. The police cannot be allowed to 'police' themselves, so it is impossible to completely scrap a governance structure, but that is not to say that any model can't be improved."

"As I said at the beginning, this is a new role that is developing all the time and I am happy to debate it with anyone at any time."

"This is a new role, it is developing

and any change in public sector accountability needs time to bed-in. The Home Office itself has launched a consultation about incorporating the fire service within the PCC remit and I personally would like to see PCCs given the responsibility to support victims throughout the criminal justice system."

When approached for comment on whether the role of PCC is set to be axed, changed, or kept untouched, the Home Office didn't give any information, however Mrs Barnes told KoS that: "The Conservative manifesto was very clear that if they won they intended to develop the role of PCCs further, not discontinue them. I welcome that."

So what of critics who say she should not stand in the next election? Mrs Barnes says she pays them no attention, telling KoS: "They're welcome to their opinion. Some of the very same people said I shouldn't stand last time and look what the result was."

And though Mrs Barnes accepts that not every minute in office has covered her with glory, she does say she feels as though she has done her duty well.

She said: "I'm an optimistic person. I take the rough with the smooth. You can always be wise after the event, and I know I've done a good job for the people of Kent."

■ What do you think? Should Ann Barnes stand again? Has she and the office been a success? Share your views and join the debate. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. Or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.



DUO: Mrs Barnes and Chief Con Alan Pughsley at victim support centre

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LONG: Refugees make the long walk down a train track at the border between Serbia and Hungary as they head north after fleeing their homeland of Syria

As we welcome refugees, county chiefs ponder the key logistics

County council leaders say they are still waiting to hear what Kent's share of those fleeing from Syria will be, but concerns continue over just where to put them and exactly who will pick up the full cost.

By Jamie Weir
jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

EVERY politician at every level of government is walking a tightrope over the current refugee situation. The extent of the crisis is such that we cannot simply turn our back on the wave of humanity spilling out of the Middle East and into Europe. But while David Cameron has agreed to allow 20,000 Syrians fleeing their war-torn homeland to seek refuge in the UK, next comes the sensitive issue of just exactly where to house them. Immigration - in whatever form - has been the number one political hot potato in Kent over the last two years, as Ukip put it centre of its policies and campaigns in its race for council, European and Parliamentary representation. Now, however, rather than slamming the doors tighter, we will be welcoming in those in desperate need of our support. The big question now is just where in Kent they will be placed? Right now, the short answer is no-one seems to know. When we spoke to the Home Office this week it confirmed details were not yet available. Home secretary Theresa May is ex-

pected to elaborate in the Commons on just that during the coming week, something local decision-makers will be keen to discover. "We don't know what the distribution mechanism will be," Kent County Council leader Paul Carter told KoS this week, "but I'd hope it will reflect the significant pressures we're already under in Kent. "We are continuing to campaign for funding above the grant the government has given us to make up for the shortfall we're facing with the costs incurred to look after migrants. "It isn't fair that burden should be placed upon taxpayers in Kent." So far Kent has been very much on the frontline of the migrant crisis as thousands seek on a near daily basis to make the leap from the camps of Calais to our shores. As a consequence, the number of unaccompanied migrant children needing to be housed at centres such as those in Cranbrook and Whitstable have rocketed. However, the government decision to accept refugees from camps close to Syria will mean a different approach by many - and that means Kent may see very little impact. One of the county's MPs said were

refugees to be distributed fairly across all constituencies in the UK it would mean just six in each. The Local Government Association (LGA) - which lobbies central government on behalf of local councils - agrees with Paul Carter. Chairman of the LGA's asylum, mi-

gration and refugee task group, David Simmonds, says the government must ensure councils like Kent's aren't placed under extra burden as a result of refugees being allowed into the UK. He said: "No-one can fail to have been affected by the tragic scenes we have all witnessed as the refugee cri-

sis has developed over recent days. Councils across the country are playing their part and local government has an excellent track record in supporting refugee children and their families.

Continued on page 20

KENT'S MIGRANT CHILDREN

When unaccompanied migrant children arrive in Kent, it is the county council's duty to look after them. Following an initial assessment which looks at issues like physical health and language abilities, under-16s go into foster care. Those aged 16 and 17-years-old will either go into foster care, or be placed in supported accommodation. These services are provided by KCC, which pays for them through the taxpayer. Over the past few years, the cost to the council has increased dramatically as the numbers leap up from 98 in May 2013, to 730 at the beginning of September. Although the Home Office provides government funding for KCC, the council says that this year it is expecting a shortfall - not good news during a time of austerity when the council's budget has been brutally cut. KCC cabinet member for specialist children's services, Peter Oakford, said: "What we have here are children from all around Europe and Asia and different African nations. "They all get on famously well. They've got a smile on their face. But when you find out about their stories, their journey here, you wonder how they have such a bright outlook on life. "One thing is clear, they've left war-torn zones, they've left behind horrific experiences and they're here to start a new life."

SHORTFALL

2011-12	£3.3 million
2012-13	£3.1 million
2013-14	£2.5 million
2014-15	£1.3 million
2015-16	£6.2 million (forecast)

NUMBERS OF UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING CHILDREN IN KENT

May 2013:.....	98
March 2014:.....	220
March 2015:.....	368
July 31, 2015:	629
September 4, 2015:	730

Continued from page 19

"The LGA has been in discussions with government over a number of years on such issues and is committed to urgently working together to find new solutions. Any support offered by councils must be on a voluntary basis where support can be adequately provided.

"However, central government has to recognise that any costs associated with this international problem must be fully met by Whitehall."

It's something the prime minister appears to be taking seriously, stating that cash to support Syrian refugees settling in the UK will be drawn from the government's aid budget. The pot, says the PM, will be spread among councils taking on migrants.

From a council point of view that additional funding is essential in the light of dramatic and savage cuts to their budgets from central government.

South Thanet Tory MP Craig Mackinlay believes an even distribution will be the fairest way of doing it, but warns that there could be funding shortfalls in the longer term.

He says that although the PM has committed the nation to taking 20,000 Syrian refugees over a five-year term, the funding is only likely to be available during the first few years. It is a particularly sensitive topic in Thanet which has seen more than its fair share of immigration in recent years.

He told KoS: "I'm very concerned about the lack of housing. If there's one issue I get a lot of post about, it is housing. To add to that with extra migrants, I don't know how we'll manage. If we have a large refugee

arrival who are offered housing before local people, there will be great difficulties."

One solution, according to the politician, could be further examination of a voluntary system which would see migrants being placed in residential homes. No shortage of people - including Bob Geldof - have already pledged to accept migrants into their homes, but as yet, there is no formal government proposal on the table.

Mr Mackinlay said: "It seems like a very sensible idea to me, and one which I think requires more investigation. It would help take the burden away from council housing, and also the private housing sector at a time when there's already a serious shortage. It should be noted that if the 20,000 refugees come over the full five years, it only amounts to an extra six in each parliamentary constituency each year. That, if distributed across the country fairly, wouldn't be difficult to absorb."

Adam Holloway, the Gravesend MP, says that the crisis has been made worse by Europe encouraging not just refugees, but also other migrants to come to the area. On Wednesday the president of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, proposed that EU member states would be forced to accept their share of an additional 120,000 refugees.

He told KoS: "The EU is sending out a message that people in poor countries can just come here and stay indefinitely. The majority of people who are arriving in Europe are economic migrants - I'd do the same if I were in their position. The problem is that the genuine refugees from war torn countries like Syria won't get the help they need."

Some, however, take a more hardline



view. South east independent MEP, Janice Atkinson said: "We need to shore up the EU's external borders, provide assessment centres in the countries of origin, fast track genuine asylum seekers in Calais and deport the majority. In the meanwhile, under the Dublin Agreement we can round up those illegal immigrants committing the crimes of trespass and breaking and entering in Calais and deport them."

MIGRANTS: Their journey to Britain is often filled with peril

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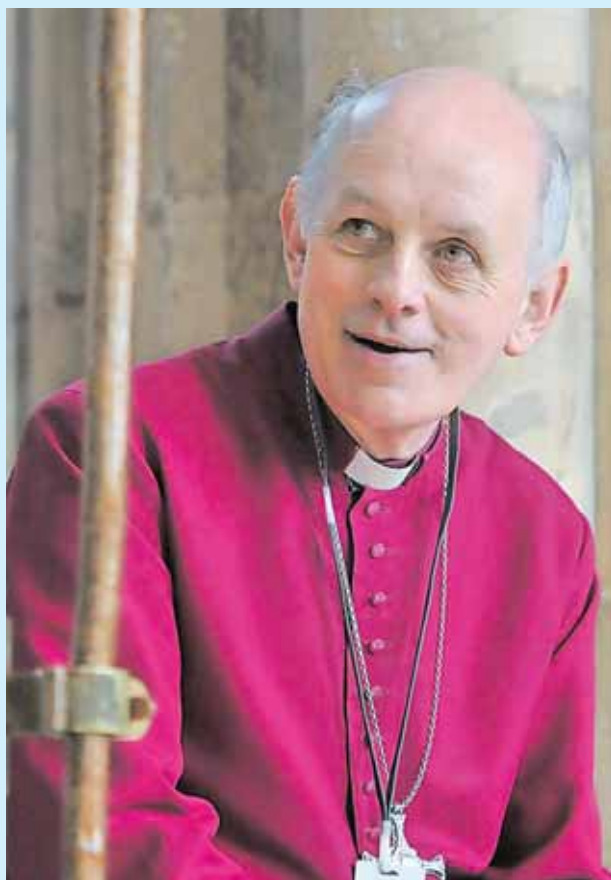


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BISHOP OF DOVER: WE MUST NEVER FORGET THE HUMAN STORIES BEHIND THE NUMBERS



Right Rev Trevor Willmott, Bishop of Dover writes exclusively on the subject of the migrant crisis for Kent on Sunday....

I've been asked many times recently whether people are doing enough. Is the government doing enough, is the Church doing enough? Quotas have been bandied around. How many has this country taken, how many should we take? Ten thousand? Twenty thousand?

The numbers and the statistics have been overwhelming, as has the human tragedy that we have seen unfolding.

However, what has concerned me about the nature of such debate is that it is easy to forget that behind each number, behind each percentage and quota, are people. Fragile human beings with hopes and fears, many of which we could all identify with.

During those chaotic days in the Keleni train station in Budapest, when thousands of refugees were being contained in the railway station, the Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orban said that Europe was in danger of losing its Christian heritage if it failed to stem the flow of largely Muslim Syrian refugees entering its borders.

For me however, the Christian heritage is one that says that humans matter. I would stand with anybody who says we have to tackle this issue seriously, and by getting back to the individual, to the humanity of each person. This is by no means an easy problem. Archbishop Justin Welby has said it is a 'complex and wicked crisis'. It has no easy answers, but it is a problem for all of us, not just some. For my

belief is that to God, no what your human condition, you matter. If you matter to God, then you matter to each and every one of us.

This is not to take lightly some peoples' concerns and fears about the growing pressure on our public services, about how our country, our county even, could cope. However this situation calls for us to understand what it is to be a refugee, to be a person fleeing persecution in fear of their life, and the lives of their families.

Kent County Council recently produced some information and short video clips around the work they do with unaccompanied young asylum seekers. Work which has come under particular scrutiny given the announcement that here has been a rise in the number of such young people Kent is now responsible for, a figure up from 220 last March, to 780 this September. What the information highlighted was the human story behind the numbers, not just of the young people, but of those who work with and meet them, and how they have been transformed by their interactions with these young people.

I am regularly out around east Kent and I am always heartened by the people I meet, many of whom, in the judgement of others, live in deprived communities. It is often they who say to me, time and time again, that we must speak out and support other people in need. This kind of compassion has been evident in the huge outpouring of generosity that has been seen in the vast amounts of humanitarian support which has already been sent by

people in Kent to those living in the 'jungle' in Calais. Many are already doing so much, and our own experience as the Church is of receiving calls from people asking, 'what can we do?' We have been doing our best to offer suggestions as to how they might wish to respond; whether it be through donating goods to organisations on the ground, donating money, or campaigning and advocating for a voice for those in need.

All of us have been challenged over the last few weeks to question our assumptions, whether by heart-breaking images of young lives tragically lost, or scenes that hark back to dark periods in Europe's history. It's not a comfortable situation; there is fear among some of the consequences of too much generosity, as well as fear from those of the consequences if we do not show enough. As a Church we have been challenged too; what might 'sanctuary' look like within our midst, and how can we serve those in need in our own communities as well as those who come to live among us?

I would suggest that a step towards each of us finding some sort of personal resolution to the conflict of reactions one might feel is to reach out and look beyond the language of the many and the 'swarms', and seek out the individual.

Listen to the individual stories and look beyond the headlines, and we might just find a life full of hope and expectation looking back at us. A life, which given a few twists of circumstance, might have been very similar to ours.

HOPE: The message from the Church is one of compassion

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Charity to cash in as £2m mansion for sale

Most expensive house in Medway will see all proceeds go to a foundation set up by the family home's former owners

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

ONE of the county's most exclusive homes has gone on the market with a £2 million price tag – and every penny raised by the sale will go straight to charity.

The seven-bedroom mansion, Boley Hill in the centre of Rochester, is Grade II-listed and dates back to the 19th century.

But it is now on the market and, according to rumours, a mystery buyer from the world of showbusiness has expressed an interest in buying a property which is shielded from prying eyes by a long driveway and trees.

It overlooks both Rochester's key landmarks – the castle and the cathedral – and is just yards from the historic high street.

Remarkably, every penny of the sale will not be passed down through the family but instead go into the coffers of a charity set up by the former owner.

The building was bought 50 years ago by architect and sculptor Hilary



Halpern and his wife Marie. The couple raised their family of three boys and two girls there.

Mr Halpern died aged 85 from heart problems two years ago, and his wife died earlier this year.

After retiring in the 1990s, he set up the charity with £200,000 to fund what is now the Nucleus Arts Centre in Rochester, which was soon joined by similar venues in Chatham and Maidstone.

Now proceeds from the sale of the

house will go to the Halpern Charitable Foundation.

Dalia Halpern-Matthews, daughter of Mr Halpern, is the chief executive of the Chatham Maritime Trust and said the charity was founded to help artists have a place to work, aid the disabled, and maintain the local 150-year-old Chatham Memorial Synagogue, in Rochester.

Over a dozen viewers have already been given the tour and agents, Tunbridge Wells-based Freeman Forman



confirmed one interested party – believed to have showbusiness links – is in negotiations.

Mrs Halpern-Matthews, 45, said: "The house was always going to go to the charity – it was in our parents' will and that was something we grew up with. Now we are ensuring

everything goes smoothly."

It is the most expensive house to have gone on the market in Medway.

There are many original features like the solid wood fireplaces and windows with original shutters, plus Tuscan style pillars, two wine stores and a spiral staircase.

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With miles of sandy, kiddie-safe beaches and bustling seaside towns all just an easy ferry ride away, it's a wonder more young British families aren't flocking to the Flemish Coast. So before the word gets out, why not pack up the car and get set to discover one of Europe's best-kept holiday secrets.



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Kids love sandy beaches and Flanders has them by the bucket (and spade) load. 42 miles to be precise. Rolling dunes give way to wide, flat beaches that

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Middelkerke with its café terraces and shops is great for a family beach holiday whilst the peace and quiet of **Bredene** is a favourite of campers and glampers.

Nieuwpoort's cosy squares, cobbled shopping streets and elegant promenade make it charming place to explore. Or head off to the characterful seaside village of **Oostduinkerke** where, at low tide between April and September, you'll see the traditional horse-back shrimp fishermen trawling for the day's catch.

TIME TO TUCK IN

No trip would be complete without trying out some Flemish foodie favourites. Try the delicious *garnaalkroketten* (shrimp croquettes) followed by *zeevruchten* (seafood-shaped Belgian chocolate with a nutty filling). And kids will just love a plate of Marie Siska's famous waffles — with chocolate sauce of course.



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Getting around with small kids usually means bundling them in and out of a car, but this is

where Flanders comes into its own. There are miles of car-free cycling routes that provide a more easy-going, fun and safe way to get around. Or you can hop on and off the *Kusttram* (coast tram) that runs the whole length of the coast, making all 13 towns super accessible.

GETTING THERE

Getting to Flanders really couldn't be easier. P&O Ferries operates two routes that both place you within a short drive of the resorts. A 90-minute crossing from Dover to Calais means De Panne is just an hour's drive away, whilst the overnight

ferry from Hull to Zeebrugge puts you in the heart of the region. Of course, taking the ferry means you can pack up all the family's gear without worrying about baggage restrictions, and gives you the option to use your own car while you're there.

Dover to Calais fares start from £39 each way for a car and up to 9 people. Hull to Zeebrugge fares start from £129 each way for two people, or take a 2 for 1 Minicruise from just £79 return for two people. Book at pof ferries.com/flanders



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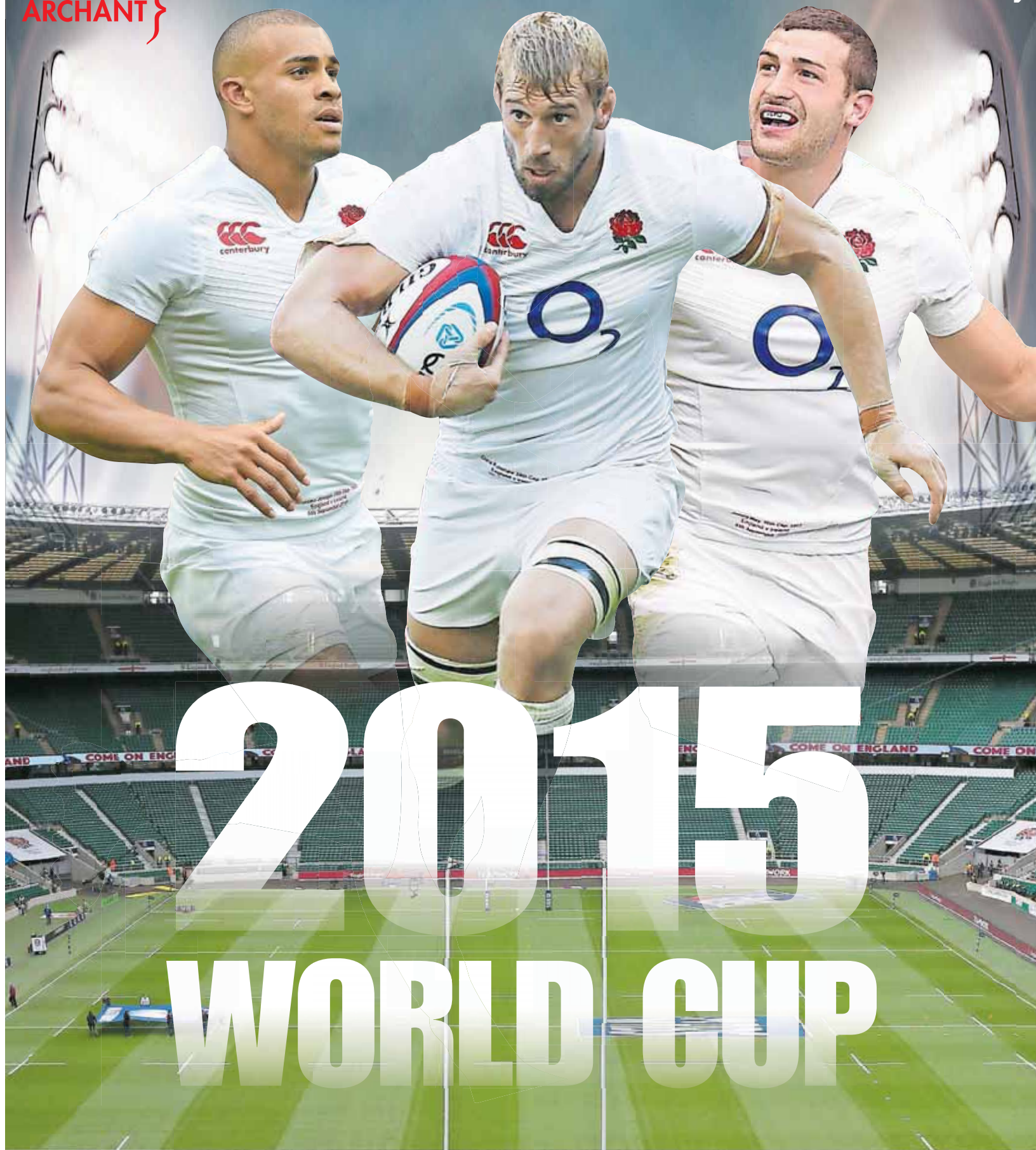
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Robshaw praises England's mix of youth and experience

Skipper is confident World Cup glory is possible for hosts



CAPTAIN: Chris Robshaw is pleased with the players he is 'going into battle with', among them is Rugby League convert Sam Burgess (far left) and Robshaw with the England coach Stuart Lancaster (left)

PA Sport's England rugby correspondent Duncan Bech speaks to England captain Chris Robshaw about the host nation's prospects of winning the World Cup

CHRIS Robshaw is convinced England have assembled a squad capable of emulating their famed forebears of 2003 by lifting the Webb Ellis Cup.

The World Cup hosts enter the most challenging pool in the tournament's history with less experience than they would have hoped for, particularly in a backline packed full of promise but short on proven international winners.

A fearsome pack, however, gives England hope of progressing from a group that includes Australia, Wales and Fiji with a first-place finish offering a kinder route to the final.

Among the Red Rose stars are big-hitting lock Courtney Lawes, gifted playmaker George Ford and powerful rugby league convert Sam Burgess. Robshaw is flooded with belief when he surveys his team-mates.

"I believe this is a squad that can win the World Cup. There are enough guys who have played in big games in various competitions who have dealt with pressure," the England captain said. "There is also

a lot of youth in there which brings excitement. The balance is very good. I look around and I'm confident in the players we have.

"I'm very pleased looking at that squad with the guys you're going to go into battle with over for what will, hopefully, be a long period of time."

As the figure-head of England's challenge for New Zealand's crown as world champions, Robshaw will be under scrutiny more than most.

The 29-year-old openside has been an ever-present under Stuart Lancaster, leading the Red Rose in all but four of the Tests since the Cumbrian was appointed head coach in 2012, and has survived a few shaky moments to develop into an assured captain.

Knowing what lies

“ Being England captain is an extremely honoured position and you are always looking for ways to improve, as well as seeing how you can get the best out of your team-mates

England captain,
Chris Robshaw

ahead during the biggest six weeks of his career, Robshaw has been consulting others who occupy the spotlight in the hope of gleaning an insight into the temperament needed to prosper.

"I try and speak to as many people as possible in the rugby forum and also outside of rugby, so sport in general, business, fashion, music," Robshaw said.

"It is useful to speak to anyone who undergoes that pressure situation, taking bits of information from them.

"We have spoken to people like (former England cricket coach) Andy Flower and (England foot-

ball coach) Roy Hodgson, who have been in big tournaments.

"I sat next to Jimmy Anderson at Wimbledon this year just before the Ashes and Stuart Broad was at one of our games recently. You pick up little things from guys like that who go into similar types of situations.

"It's about having that dedication and commitment to each other when you know there are going to be tough times ahead. You need to make sure you are there for each other.

"Being England captain is an extremely honoured position and you are always looking for ways to improve, as well as seeing how you can get the best out of your team-mates."

Robshaw, who was a high profile omission from the 2011 squad, has also learned a lesson from Martin Johnson's class of 2003 on the importance of winning ugly.

"It's about learning how to win. I think everyone asks how do you want to play and how do you want to perform, but it's about winning at the end of the day," Robshaw said.

"I have spoken to a number of the guys who won the World Cup for England and they said that they had times where they flew past people and times when they just about clawed their way through a game.

"They could easily have lost those games. However, no-one really remembers those games unless you are a rugby fanatic. It is about finding ways to win and doing what needs to be done in every situation."

WORLD CUP BY NUMBERS

0 - the number of World Cup champions to successfully defend their title

1 - the number of Northern hemisphere countries to have won the World Cup

3 - the most red cards in a World Cup match, occurring between South Africa and Canada in 1995

5 - the most drop goals in a single World Cup game came in South Africa's victory over England in 1999

10 - the record number of yellow cards collected by any country in World Cup history belongs to Tonga

13 - the number of stadiums being used to host matches at the 2015 World Cup

15 - the record number of World Cup tries scored by an individual player, held by former New Zealand winger Jonah Lomu

48 - the number of fixtures at the World Cup

142 - the number of points scored in the biggest World Cup victory as Australia hammered Namibia 142-0 in 2003

272 - the record number of tries scored in World Cup history, held by New Zealand

277 - the record number of points scored by an individual player at World Cups, held by England's Jonny Wilkinson

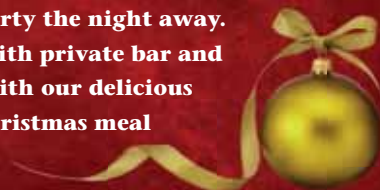
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6th November

MC - Paul Ricketts Opener - Bobby Murdock,
Middle - Robert White - Musical comedy star
Headliner 1 - Nina Benjamin -
As seen on Big Brother's Big Mouth (Ch4), Edinburgh and Beyond (Comedy Central),
Headliner 2 - Mike Gunn - As seen on Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow

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Additional day guests charged at £63pp, additional evening guests charged at £17.50pp

Saturdays - £5,000.00 - available on:

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5, 12, 19, 26 November (usually £5,810.00)
Additional day guests charged at £66pp, additional evening guests charged at £17.50p

Sundays - £3,112.50 - available on:

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1 TWICKENHAM

London

Capacity: 81,605




England v Fiji	Sept 18	Quarter-final 1	Oct 17
France v Italy	Sept 19	Quarter-final 4	Oct 18
England v Wales	Sept 26	Semi-final 1	Oct 24
England v Australia	Oct 3	Semi-final 2	Oct 25
Australia v Wales	Oct 10	World Cup Final	Oct 31

5 ETIHAD STADIUM

Manchester

Capacity: 47,800



England v Uruguay	Oct 10
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8 KING POWER STADIUM

Leicester

Capacity: 32,312



Argentina v Tonga	Oct 4
Canada v Romania	Oct 6
Argentina v Namibia	Oct 11

10 KINGSHOLM

Gloucester

Capacity: 16,500



Tonga v Georgia	Sept 19	Argentina v Georgia	Sept 25
Scotland v Japan	Sept 23	USA v Japan	Oct 11

2 MILLENNIUM STADIUM

Cardiff

Capacity: 74,154



Ireland v Canada	Sept 19	N Zealand v Georgia	Oct 2
Wales v Uruguay	Sept 20	France v Ireland	Oct 11
Australia v Fiji	Sept 23	Quarter-final 2	Oct 17
Wales v Fiji	Oct 1	Quarter-final 3	Oct 18

6 ST JAMES' PARK

Newcastle

Capacity: 52,409




South Africa v Scotland	Oct 3
N Zealand v Tonga	Oct 9
Samoa v Scotland	Oct 10

11 STADIUM MK

Milton Keynes

Capacity: 30,717



France v Canada	Oct 1
Samoa v Japan	Oct 3
Fiji v Uruguay	Oct 6

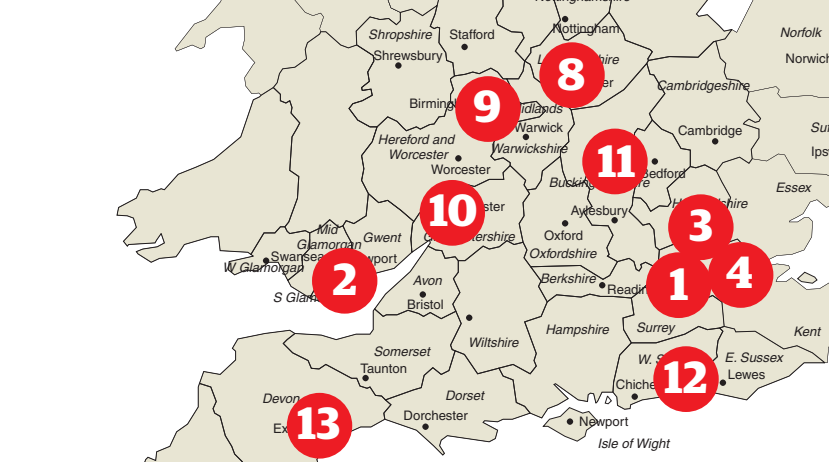
3 WEMBLEY

London

Capacity: 90,000



N Zealand v Argentina	Sept 20
Ireland v Romania	Sept 27



12 AMEX COMMUNITY STADIUM

Brighton

Capacity: 30,750



South Africa v Japan	Sept 19
Samoa v USA	Sept 20

4 OLYMPIC STADIUM

London

Capacity: 54,000



France v Romania	Sept 23	South Africa v USA	Oct 7
N Zealand v Namibia	Sept 24	Bronze Final	Oct 30
Ireland v Italy	Oct 7		

7 ELLAND ROAD

Leeds

Capacity: 37,914



Italy v Canada	Sept 26
Scotland v USA	Sept 27

9 VILLA PARK

Birmingham

Capacity: 42,785



S Africa v Samoa	Sept 26
Australia v Uruguay	Sept 27

13 SANDY PARK

Exeter

Capacity: 12,300



Tonga v Namibia	Sept 29
Namibia v Georgia	Oct 7
Italy v Romania	Oct 11

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MICHAEL HOOPER
AUSTRALIA

Form: Won a truncated Rugby Championship after toppling South Africa and New Zealand at home, but then slipped to a heavy defeat in Auckland to ensure the Bledisloe Cup eludes them once more. Shaping up well under new coach Michael Cheika and possess arguably the most gifted backline in the whole tournament.



Coach: Michael Cheika - Cheika has taken to international rugby coaching like a duck to water, with his impact on Australia proving significant. They will arrive for the World Cup as Rugby Championship title holders and boasting the world game's finest back division. Serious World Cup contenders.



Captain: Stephen Moore - Took over the job from Michael Hooper for the Rugby Championship and earned plaudits for his leadership. A fearless ball-carrying hooker who idolised Keith Wood as a youngster.



Star player: Michael Hooper - Possibly the best openside in the world, although Richie McCaw might have a word to say about that. Not the biggest flanker, but explosive as a carrier and great over the ball.

World Cup history: As winners in 1991 and 1999 and runners-up in 2003, Australia boast a proud World Cup record. Have a habit of finding a way around their weaknesses and are always a force when challenging for the Webb Ellis Cup.

RWC RECORD: P41W33D0 L8



JONATHAN JOSEPH
ENGLAND

Form: Four successive runners-up finishes in the RBS 6 Nations paint an accurate picture of a team that has made a habit of falling just short, often by the narrowest of margins. Mixed fortunes in the two warm-up games against France have added uncertainty, although the management would justifiably advise against reading too much into the games.



Coach: Stuart Lancaster - Arguably under the most pressure of any coach at World Cup 2015. A nation expects England to thrive against the backdrop of being host country, and Lancaster will need to handle that. The former schoolteacher has won many admirers for the calm, professional way he has led England since his appointment in March 2012, but the biggest test of his sporting life now awaits.



Captain: Chris Robshaw - A brave openside who leads by example week after week. His appetite for work is dizzying and he repeatedly tops the tackle and carry charts. Foraging on the ground remains a weakness, however.



Star player: Jonathan Joseph - Watching Joseph switch on the afterburners to glide through outside channels evokes memories of Jeremy Guscott in his pomp. Add in his dazzling footwork and England possess an outside centre of rare quality.

World Cup history: Winners in 2003 when Jonny Wilkinson kicked an extra-time drop goal with seconds to spare and beaten finalists in 1991 and 2007. Finished fourth in 1995, but bombed in 2011.

RWC RECORD: P40W29D0L11



GEORGE NORTH
WALES

Form: Wales won the 2012 and 2013 Six Nations, but then saw Ireland steal their crown for the next two years. Put themselves in with a chance of winning on the final day of this year's Championship, only to miss out on points difference. Still struggle to defeat the biggest southern hemisphere teams, falling just short time and again.



Coach: Warren Gatland - New Zealander Gatland has overseen a consistent period of success for Wales, masterminding three Six Nations titles - including two Grand Slams - in addition to a 2011 World Cup semi-final appearance, but getting his team out of their pool will feature among the toughest tasks he has encountered.



Captain: Sam Warburton - Still only 26-years-old, Warburton is one of the most established captains in international rugby. Made his debut in 2010 and was appointed skipper the year after. Two years later he led the British and Irish Lions to Australia.



Star player: George North - The giant wing was sidelined for the end of last season and much of the summer due to concussion, but has been restored to fitness. Powerful and direct, North could be a star of England 2015.

World Cup history: It has been lean pickings for Wales, who struggled in the tournament until 2011 when they were edged by France in a nail-biting semi-final that saw Warburton dismissed for a spear tackle. Howls of protest ensued.

RWC RECORD: P32W18D0 L14



NIKI GONEVA
FIJI

Form: Very good, defeating Tonga, Samoa and Japan to set up a 2015 Pacific Nations Cup final against Samoa, who they topped with a convincing 39-29 victory. Only weeks earlier Samoa had given New Zealand a second-half scare in Napier before going down 25-16, a result that speak volumes for Fiji's achievement.



Coach: John McKee - Fiji are nobody's fools when it comes to World Cup time. New Zealander McKee has been determined to toughen up the Fijian pack, which would complement their exciting backs, and do not be surprised if the former Cornish Pirates boss oversees an upset in this World Cup.



Captain: Akapusi Qera - The Montpellier openside will be appearing at a third World Cup and his second as Fiji's captain. A well-travelled openside who played for Gloucester for seven years, he is a key link in Fiji's attacking game.



Star player: Niki Goneva - Made his name for Leicester in the 2013-14 campaign as strong try-scoring centre who can make a break and while he failed to scale those heights last season, the squad's vice-captain is one of Fiji's dangermen.

World Cup history: Fiji have precious few wins against tier one nations, but their 38-34 victory over Wales in 2007 was one of them. It remains their World Cup highlight, although their battling 37-20 loss to South Africa in the ensuing quarter-final was admirable.

RWC RECORD: P24W9 D0 L15



FELIPE BERCHESE
URUGUAY

Form: Thrashed by Japan in the build up to the World Cup, it could be argued that just by qualifying for the global showpiece Uruguay have succeeded. Toppling Russia over two legs has earned their place at the tournament, but a long four weeks awaits in the toughest pool in history.



Coach: Pablo Lemoine - Uruguay are no-hopes in the World Cup's so-called pool of death, but that will not stop Lemoine - Uruguay's first professional player - from producing a committed, determined team. Lemoine won 49 Test caps and two French titles during his spell with Stade Francais, so he knows the ropes.



Captain: Santiago Vilaseca - Uruguay were dealt a blow when experienced back row Rodrigo Capo Ortega, who also played in the 2003 World Cup, unexpectedly announced his international retirement. Hard-working flanker Vilaseca has stepped into the breach.



Star player: Felipe Berchesi - The fly-half is a reliable kicker out of hand and from the tee and is the pivot for Uruguay's attack. A strong game-manager and will need to be when he faces Australia, England, Wales and Fiji.

World Cup history: England 2015 will be Uruguay's third World Cup and the South Americans will be hoping to improve on a record of two wins from seven matches. In 2003 England scored 111 points against them.

RWC RECORD: P7 W2 D0 L5



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DUANE VERMEULEN
SOUTH AFRICA

Form: South Africa suffered four successive defeats, including a 37-25 home loss to Argentina before responding with a win in Buenos Aires. There is still a reliance on established stars like Fourie de Preez, Jean de Villiers, Victor Matfield and Duane Vermeulen. The two-time winners' tournament could unravel if their leading lights do not find form quickly.



Coach: Heyneke Meyer - South Africa, World Cup winners in 1995 and 2007, are traditional tournament heavyweights, and this year's global spectacular will be no different for the Springboks. Appointed as national coach on a four-year term in January 2012, Meyer's coaching career is likely to be defined by what unfolds over the next two months.



Captain: Jean de Villiers - The Springbok skipper returned from a horrific knee injury only to break his jaw on his first start back, against Argentina. He will likely miss the first two pool games, but the classy centre is a key figure for his side.



Star player: Duane Vermeulen - The number eight is a barnstorming back-row presence. He will move from the Stormers to Toulon after the tournament, where he will hope to make his presence felt after a recent neck injury.

World Cup history: Who could forget South Africa's win in the 1995 tournament, when Nelson Mandela wore the Springbok jersey, uniting a nation? South Africa won again 12 years later in France and can be considered among the favourites, despite their quarter-final elimination four years ago.

RWC RECORD: P29W25D0 L4



KAHN FOTUALI'I
SAMOA

Form: The Pacific Island side pushed New Zealand close in Apia in July and had mixed results in clashes with the United States, Canada and Fiji, beating the North American sides and drawing one and losing another to their fellow islanders. They have beaten Scotland in recent years and will fancy their chances of advancing.



Coach: Stephen Betham - Samoa have a reputation for being tough World Cup opponents, and they are eminently capable of making their presence felt this time around. Betham carved his reputation as Samoa's sevens head coach, steering them to World Series success in 2010, and that free-flowing style he champions is now likely to surface on the sport's biggest stage.



Captain: Ofisa Treviranus - The London Irish back-row has made a huge impact with his destructive defence and strong ball carrying after he was spotted during the 2011 tournament.



Star player: Kahn Fotuali'i - The physical and nimble scrum-half has demonstrated his supreme talent with Ospreys and Northampton in recent years and can be the catalyst to get a potent Samoa back division moving.

World Cup history: Samoa reached the quarter-finals in their first participation in 1991 and four years later. The last three tournaments have seen them unable to exit the pool. That will be the target in 2015 and it is a realistic one.

RWC RECORD: P24W11D0 L13



MALE SA'U
JAPAN

Form: The perennial Asian champions, the Brave Blossoms often win the continental championship but find other opposition challenging. Consecutive losses to the United States, Fiji and Tonga were followed by a win over Uruguay. Eddie Jones' side will be targeting a second World Cup win when they face the USA.



Coach: Eddie Jones - Jones guided Australia to the 2003 World Cup final, when the Wallabies lost to England after extra-time, and he is regarded as possessing one of the sharpest coaching minds around. Japan have beaten Wales and Italy under his direction, and no stone will be left unturned in his World Cup preparation.



Captain: Michael Leitch - The New Zealand-born back row is of Fijian descent and moved to Japan to study. He liked it so much he stayed and is now captain. He is returning to Super Rugby with the Chiefs in 2016.



Star player: Male Sa'u - Another New Zealand-born player, the centre or fly-half plays his club rugby for Melbourne Rebels. He starred in Japan's win over Wales in 2013.

World Cup history: Japan have qualified for every World Cup since 1987, but have never progressed past the pool stages. The defeat of Zimbabwe in 1991 remains their only victory, but their draw in 2007 against Canada was arguably a more unexpected and impressive result.

RWC RECORD: P22W1 D2 L21



STUART HOGG
SCOTLAND

Form: A first win of 2015 came in the World Cup warm-up contest with Italy in Turin after another Six Nations whitewash. Victories in November 2014 over Argentina and Tonga had provided some confidence but there is still plenty of room for improvement and coach Vern Cotter is looking to imports to provide it.



Coach: Vern Cotter - New Zealander Cotter took up the reins as Scotland head coach just over a year ago, but the former Clermont Auvergne supremo has experienced a testing time, with his squad suffering a Six Nations whitewash last season. A probable quarter-final awaits against England, Australia or Wales - if Scotland emerge from their pool.



Captain: Greig Laidlaw - Laidlaw has captained Scotland of late, but his own scrum-half position has come under threat from Henry Pyrgos and Sam Hidalgo-Clyne. Laidlaw is a fine goalkicker.



Star player: Stuart Hogg - The Glasgow Warriors full-back is versatile, confident under the high ball and a fine and elusive runner from deep. It is down to whether Scotland can use him.

World Cup history: Semi-finalists in 1991 and five-time quarter-finalists, Scotland failed to advance from the pool stages for the first time in New Zealand four years ago. New Zealander Cotter has made improvements, but whether it is enough remains to be seen.

RWC RECORD: P33W19 D1 L13



SAMU MANOA
UNITED STATES

Form: The US Eagles enter the tournament after two confidence-building wins over neighbours Canada. That followed a victory over pool rivals Japan, a result which was sandwiched by losses to Samoa and Tonga. There are talented individuals in the squad, it is just whether there are enough.



Coach: Mike Tolkin - Tolkin has a long connection with American rugby, having worked with the national under-19s squad before taking on senior duties, first as defence specialist and then head coach. Rugby union is growing at a fast pace in the States, highlighted by last year's game against New Zealand in Chicago, so continued momentum will be key at the World Cup.



Captain: Chris Wyles - The impressive wing or full-back is a mainstay for Saracens and will be playing in his third World Cup, after featuring in the 2007 and 2011 tournaments.



Star player: Samu Manoa - The number eight is one of the best in European club rugby, so good that Toulon have handed him a four-year contract to prise him from Northampton.

World Cup history: The USA have won three games in 21 attempts in tournament history, the most recent coming in 2011 against Russia. The Eagles also won twice against pool opponents Japan, in 1987 and 2003 and they are still to advance from the group stages.

RWC RECORD: P21W3 D0 L18

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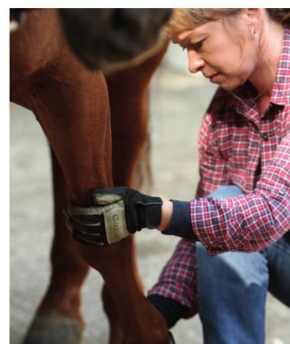


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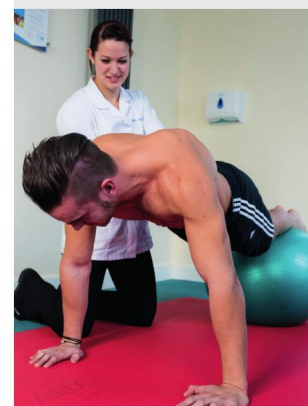


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JULIAN SAVEA
NEW ZEALAND

Form: Any doubts emerging from New Zealand's surprise Rugby Championship defeat to Australia were soon extinguished as the All Blacks exacted revenge with an emphatic victory seven days later. The squad's ageing stars are showing few signs of decline and Steve Hansen's side come to England as clear favourites to defend their 2011 crown.



Coach: Steve Hansen - Hansen seamlessly succeeded 2011 World Cup-winning coach Graham Henry as New Zealand's chief of staff, and he will arrive at the World Cup with a squad hell-bent on defending its title. If the All Blacks get it right, as they invariably do, then their standard will be too high for the rest. And deep down, Hansen knows it.



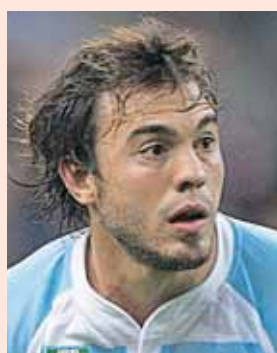
Captain: Richie McCaw - McCaw is the most capped player in Test history after making his 142nd appearance this summer. The flanker is the totem of the New Zealand side and will be leading them out for his fourth World Cup.



Star player: Julian Savea - Savea's 30 tries in 35 international matches is testament to his status as the most lethal finisher in the game. The winger's strength and pace makes him a frightening prospect for any defence.

World Cup history: New Zealand are bidding to become the first team to win a third World Cup after previous triumphs in 1987 and 2011. It is remarkable then the All Blacks are still considered under-achievers on the biggest stage, having lost one final, three semi-finals and a quarter-final in 2007.

RWC RECORD: P43W37D0 L6



JUAN MARTIN HERNANDEZ
ARGENTINA

Form: A superb Rugby Championship win over South Africa - the first in their history over the Springboks - offered a glimpse of what Argentina are capable of when they hit top gear. A try-less defeat against the same opponents seven days later, however, suggests the Pumas still lack the penetration and consistency to challenge.



Coach: Daniel Hourcade - Hourcade's squad will arrive at the World Cup on the back of a superb Rugby Championship victory over South Africa in Durban, and the Pumas once again boast some outstanding players that look set to grace the world stage. Hourcade has been a coach for more than 20 years, graduating to the top rugby job in Argentina two years ago.



Captain: Agustin Creevy - Creevy, a tenacious hooker, is also renowned for his handling skills and brings much-needed experience to the Argentina ranks. The 30-year-old played at the 2011 World Cup and has represented Biarritz, Clermont and Worcester at club level.



Star player: Juan Martin Hernandez - Argentina's strength traditionally lies in the pack but Hernandez's creativity injects sparkle into the back line. The 33-year-old has 53 Test matches to his name and his reliable boot represents a valuable weapon for the side's point-scoring.

World Cup history: Argentina's steady progress on the international stage gained lift off in 2007 when they beat Ireland and France, twice, to finish third. Before then, the Pumas had only escaped the Pools once in five attempts.

RWC RECORD: P30W15D0 L15



FETU'U VAINIKOLO
TONGA

Form: Victories over Japan, the United States and Canada in the Pacific Nations Cup this summer will have given Tonga confidence ahead of the World Cup but defeats to Fiji, as well as Scotland in November last year, suggest they are still outsiders to reach the knock-out stages.



Coach: Mana Otai - Otai has experienced the full range of highs and lows since he was appointed as Tonga head coach three years ago. He plotted a first win against Scotland that provided a dream start to his reign, but consistent results did not follow, and it effectively required a solid European tour last year - which Tonga delivered - to keep him in post.



Captain: Nili Latu - Latu made his Test debut in 2006 and the back-row forward has since established a reputation as one of the toughest tacklers in the game. Now 33, this will likely be Latu's last World Cup and he will eager to go out with a bang.



Star player: Fetu'u Vainikolo - Vainikolo is no newcomer to international rugby, having made 21 Test matches for Tonga, but he has scored an impressive 16 tries in that time including one against Japan at the World Cup four years ago.

World Cup history: Tonga have never made it past the pool stage at a World Cup although a 19-14 win over France in 2011 put them in contention, before defeat to Canada ended the Islanders' hopes of progress. Tonga have improved in each of their six tournaments but they will likely have to overcome Argentina if they are to make the knock-outs this time around.

RWC RECORD: P21W6 D0 L15



MAMUKA GORGODZE
GEORGIA

Form: Wins against Romania, Russia, Spain, Portugal and Germany this year have shown Georgia to be a cut above the emerging European nations but they still have work to do to close the gap on more established sides as proven by convincing defeats to Tonga and Ireland at the end of last year.



Coach: Milton Haig - Haig's rugby apprenticeship is an impressive one, having worked with current Scotland boss Vern Cotter at Bay of Plenty in New Zealand and also coaching New Zealand's Under-21 team for two seasons. Georgia are traditionally tough, physical opponents, who should be enhanced by Haig's expertise.



Captain: Levan Datunashvili - Datunashvili has been a regular fixture in the Georgian side for more than 10 years since making his Test debut in 2004. The veteran lock played in both his country's two World Cup victories to date and will be eager to build on those successes in Pool C.



Star player: Mamuka Gorgodze - Georgia boast a number of powerhouse forwards and driving at the back of that scrum is Toulon back-rower Gorgodze. At 6ft 5in and 118kg, "Gorgodzilla" is an intimidating presence for any opponent, which he demonstrated in a superb World Cup display against England four years ago.

World Cup history: This year's tournament represents a fourth consecutive World Cup for Georgia, an achievement in itself given they only first qualified in 2003. Since then they have managed two wins, against Namibia in 2007 and Romania in 2011.

RWC RECORD: P12W2 D0 L10



TINUS-DU-PLESSIS
NAMIBIA

Form: Namibia are still the standout African side, as proven by comfortable wins over Zimbabwe, Kenya and Tunisia this year. Victories over Romania and Russia have also offered room for encouragement, either side of a disappointing defeat against Spain in June.



Coach: Phil Davies - Minnows Namibia have turned to former Wales international forward Davies as their World Cup guide, but the ex-Leeds, Cardiff Blues and Worcester coach faces a Herculean task. Davies has only been in the role since June, and while he offers considerable experience and expertise, Namibia's World Cup odds of 5,000-1 say it all.



Captain: Jacques Burger - Burger will be leading his side out for a third World Cup and it will be a particularly special achievement for the fearless Saracens flanker, who almost had to retire through injury two years ago.



Star player: Tinus du Plessis - Du Plessis has seven World Cup appearances under his belt and the 31-year-old's experience will be important in containing superior opposition. The back-row forward has scored six tries in 43 appearances for his country.

World Cup history: Namibia are yet to register a single victory in 15 World Cup matches and hold the unfortunate record of the tournament's greatest defeat, losing 142-0 to Australia in 2003. That margin may be under threat when the competition's lowest ranked side meet New Zealand in Match 12, while Georgia represent the team's best chance of a first World Cup win.

RWC RECORD: P15W0 D0 L15



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WESLEY FOFANA

FRANCE

Form: Les Bleus have had an abysmal time under coach Philippe Saint-Andre, who will be replaced by Toulouse stalwart Guy Noves after the World Cup. Two successive fourth-placed Six Nations finishes underline France's travails, with Saint-Andre lambasted for unpatriotic pragmatism. A stirring performance in a 25-20 World Cup warm-up victory over England in Paris did however stir echoes of France's classic, swashbuckling style.

Coach: Philippe Saint-Andre - Saint-Andre will be succeeded by Toulouse head coach Guy Noves after the World Cup, and it is indicative of his time in charge of Les Bleus that no-one really knows how France will perform. They could be brilliant, they could be dreadful, but the World Cup campaign is certainly unlikely to be uneventful.

Captain: Thierry Dusautoir - The gritty flanker takes the armband despite carrying a knee injury into the tournament, such is the depth of his influence. The 33-year-old approaches his third World Cup, and when fit remains as much a breakdown menace as ever.

Star player: Wesley Fofana - As with Jonathan Joseph for England, so Fofana for France is the midfield antidote to a game cluttered with giants. The Clermont centre's guile and wit offers a vital foil to the juggernaut antics of usual partner Mathieu Bastareaud.

World Cup history: Whatever the approaching shambles, France always pull it together for the World Cup. Three finals, three semi-finals and a quarter-final speak volumes on France's ability to shine under the greatest spotlight.

RWC RECORD: P43W30D1 L12



JOHNNY SEXTON

IRELAND

Form: Arguably the best of all time - but definitely since the inception of world rankings. Head coach Joe Schmidt has overseen two successive RBS 6 Nations title charges, and Ireland now sit second in the world standings for the first time. Hopes are higher than ever that Ireland can reach a maiden World Cup semi-final.

Coach: Joe Schmidt - Ireland have never progressed beyond the World Cup quarter-finals, but expectation - largely due to Schmidt - is huge this time around. Since the New Zealander took charge, Ireland can reflect on winning successive Six Nations titles and delivering a consistency of performance so often lacking in the past. Tournament dark horses.

Captain: Paul O'Connell - The talisman lock will bring down his Test career after the World Cup, and swap home province Munster for superstar French Riviera outfit Toulon. All Ireland demands a fitting swansong.

Star player: Johnny Sexton - Ireland are simply not the same team without the British and Irish Lions fly-half. The tenacious, accurate and exacting playmaker binds Schmidt's demanding gameplan.

World Cup history: A catalogue of underachievement: or at least perennial quarter-finalists. The Irish have only failed to reach the last eight in two of the seven tournaments to date. The 19-18 last-eight defeat to Australia in 1991 hit hard, but no doubt the 22-10 loss to Wales in 2011 resonates for Ireland's current Test generation.

RWC RECORD: P30W17D0 L13



SERGIO PARISSÉ

ITALY

Form: Narrowly avoided the Wooden Spoon in this year's Six Nations and will view that as a solid overall effort. Still battling for parity with the top European powers, and will in truth be hard pushed to progress from this group.

Coach: Jacques Brunel - Frenchman Brunel has never really been able to stamp his mark on the Azzurri since he took charge, despite claiming some impressive one-off wins. Still way too much reliance on Italy's magnificent captain Sergio Parisse, and it will be a major surprise if they do not go out in the pool stage.

Captain: Sergio Parisse - The peerless number eight just keeps on churning out sublime performances, even when surrounded by mediocrity. The Stade Français star is now 31 but has excelled in the Test arena for more than a decade.

Star player: Sergio Parisse - Repetition is discouraged in such bite-size guides, but Parisse is simply so much better than his Azzurri peers there can be no other stand-out choice. The skill-set of a Test centre with the street-smarts of a seasoned back row.

World Cup history: The Azzurri have never progressed beyond the pool stages in the seven tournaments to date, though have won two games at the last three competitions.

RWC RECORD: P24W9 D0 L15



JAMIE CUDMORE

CANADA

Form: Canada lost all four matches at the recent Pacific Nations Cup and have not won since a 17-13 win over Namibia in November. Only Uruguay and Namibia are ranked lower than the Canadians among the 20 World Cup competitors.

Coach: Kieran Crowley - Canada coach Crowley is a World Cup winner, having been part of New Zealand's 1987 squad. He cut his coaching teeth in New Zealand provincial rugby, and since landing the Canada role seven years ago he has overseen a solidity in the squad, while adding attacking touches that have helped the Canadians become more of an all-round force.

Captain: Tyler Ardron - The back-rower has been included in Canada's squad despite carrying a knee injury through the Pacific Nations Cup. The Ospreys loose-forward should recover comfortably in time for group-stage action however.

Star player: Jamie Cudmore - Veteran lock Cudmore is still turning screws for Clermont Auvergne, almost 20 years after a stint in a Canadian youth detention centre courtesy of acting as muscle for a drug dealer.

World Cup history: Just once in World Cup history have Canada escaped the pool stages. Their reward? A 1991 meeting with New Zealand. The All Blacks eased home 29-13 just as expected. Canada have since failed to live up to their showing in the second World Cup, and may struggle again.

RWC RECORD: P25W7 D2 L16



OVIDIU TONITA

ROMANIA

Form: The world's 17th-ranked side have never beaten any of their Pool D rivals at a World Cup, and face a tall order to alter that statistic. Romania regained the World Rugby Nations Cup title this year, but know full well the global showpiece battle is an entirely different proposition.

Coach: Lynn Howells - Howells will know that Romania have got their work cut out, but the Welshman will undoubtedly have his charges well-prepared. His coaching pedigree is an impressive one, having worked as Wales assistant to Graham Henry at the 1999 World Cup and led Wales on tour to Japan two years later.

Captain: Mihai Macovei - Flanker Macovei plies his trade at French club Colomiers and has eight years' Test rugby experience under his belt. The 28-year-old will not lack for physicality, but may fall prey to the superior tactical nous of the French and Irish.

Star player: Ovidiu Tonita - Tonita has won World Cup selection for the fifth time running, and is set for action in his fourth consecutive tournament. The 35-year-old former Perpignan and Carcassonne back-rower has joined Aix en Provence this summer, and has been playing in France since 2001.

World Cup history: Seven-straight pool stage eliminations indicate the size of the challenge that faces Romania when it comes to taking on the world's best. The Romanians were unable to post any victories in 2011, just their second winless tournament, to add to their miserable 1995.

RWC RECORD: P24W5 D0 L19

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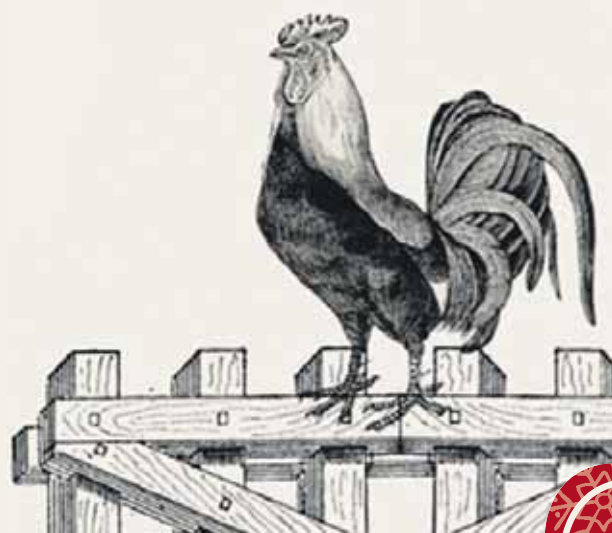
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The stars set to light up the finals

Players with power, speed and the skills to turn any match...

1 Richie McCAW (New Zealand)

Unquestionably the greatest player of his generation, flanker McCaw captained New Zealand to World Cup glory four years ago and he recently became the most-capped individual in rugby union history with a remarkable 142 Test match appearances. At 34, his final World Cup beckons, and another major success – no player has ever skippered a team to successive world titles – would add another memorable chapter to a glorious career.

2 Israel FOLAU (Australia)

Australia possess arguably the most lethal back division in world rugby, and Folau is the fearsome strike weapon at its heart. The 26-year-old played rugby league for Australia and Melbourne Storm as a teenager before embarking on a stint in Australian Rules Football with Great Western Sydney Giants. Now, 33 appearances into his rugby union Test career, the Wallabies full-back is set to grace the sport's biggest stage, and it looks likely to be a box-office appearance.

3 George FORD (England)

Twelve years after the most famous England fly-half of all time drop-kicked his country to World Cup glory, Ford now finds himself with the keys to number 10 that were once held by Jonny Wilkinson. At 22, there is enormous responsibility on his shoulders to not only guide England through arguably the toughest-ever World Cup pool – Australia and Wales are among their opponents – but he must also attempt it on home soil. Coped impressively with every challenge in his career so far, but this is another level completely.

4 George NORTH (Wales)

Juggernaut wing North has all the attributes to be a headline act of the 2015 World Cup. A powerful try-scoring machine – his current Wales tally of 22 touchdowns is bettered only by Shane Williams, Gareth Thomas and Ieuan Evans – he is now fully fit and firing again following a testing time last season when he suffered three concussion injuries and was out of competitive action for five months. North, 23, will be critical to Wales' World Cup hopes, but the bigger the occasion, the more he thrives.

5 Louis PICAMOLES (France)

France have proved to be occasionally brilliant, but often dire, during the reign of coach Philippe Saint-Andre, which comes to an end after the World Cup. The age-old question of which French team will turn up – good, bad, ugly, or a mixture of all three – is once again relevant, but in barnstorming number eight Picamoles they possess a player of considerable stature, who can influence a game through his physical prowess and prodigious ball-carrying ability. Likely to be exceptional, whatever the circumstances.



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WEAPON: The Reaper drones were used in the killing of Reyaad Khan and Ruhul Amin, both pictured below

MP defends drone death raids as pressure grows on Syrian crisis

Chris Murphy speaks to county's politicians after revelations of British 'kill list' sparks controversy

A LEADING MP has hit out over criticism of British forces intervening in the war in Syria – a conflict which has sparked a wave of refugees fleeing the country and seeking safety in Europe.

It follows the drone attacks earlier this week on targets in Syria which saw two British men – considered a threat to the safety of the nation and preparing imminent attacks on our streets – killed.

It sparked criticism, however, that the Government now has a so-called 'kill list' of apparent extremists.

But others say steps have to be taken in a bid to stop the Islamic State (IS) terrorist group making further in-roads in the war-torn country.

So is military intervention by British forces now necessary?

North Thanet MP Sir Roger Gale told KoS: "Simple answer; if necessary to help to defeat IS and establish some stability in the region, yes.

"We need to know, though, that intervention will help to solve the problem and not exacerbate it.

"As an aside it's interesting to note that those who are most concerned, rightly, about the plight of refugees are also some of those most opposed to taking the necessary actions to resolve the core of the problem."

Reyaad Khan, from Cardiff, and Ruhul Amin died in a vehicle near Raqqa in Syria, when a Reaper drone flown from a base in the Middle East but controlled by a British RAF crew launched a remote missile attack.

Some reports suggest the strike

was specifically against Khan, 21, and Amin, from Aberdeen, just happened to be in the same vehicle.

A third Brit, Junaid Hussain, 21, from Birmingham, was killed in a separate air strike by US forces in Raqqa three days later. In retaliation, IS released a sickening video of an Afghan soldier being beheaded.

However, opponents say taking such steps without presenting conclusive evidence against the victims, is a dangerous road to travel.

Chris Cole, head of the Drone Wars campaign group, described the use of the remote-controlled craft for the "deliberate killing of a British citizen" as "shocking".

Sevenoaks MP and defence secretary Michael Fallon said the move was right and the government would do it again.

He described it as a "perfectly legal act of self defence" and added: "There are a large number of individuals – not all British – out there in Syria... who are actively involved in planning armed attacks here in Britain.

"We wouldn't hesitate to take similar action again."

Further mili-

tary intervention – in particular boots on the grounds – seem unlikely, however. Although some of our MPs were not closed to the idea – if a strong enough case could be presented.

Sittingbourne and Sheppey MP Gordon Henderson told KoS: "There is currently no question of military action in Syria and any such action would require the permission of Parliament. If the prime minister asked my colleagues and me to agree to such action, I would listen carefully to what he had to say, weigh up the threat to Britain at that time and then make a decision."

He added: "The killing of the two Jihadists by a drone was not my idea of

'military action', which, in my mind, is the description of a full scale attack either by aircraft or land forces.

"If you are asking me whether I support that action, and similar action in the future, then the answer is yes, but only if it is the only way of neutralising dangerous terrorists, who are a threat to Britain's national security. In those circumstances the prime minister does not require the permission of Parliament to authorise such strikes, he would just need to justify his decision afterwards."

Maidstone MP Helen Grant said she also backs the decision to attack targets in Syria.

She told us: "Two years ago Parliament voted 'no' to military intervention in Syria. The motion was specifically about preventing the Assad regime from continuing to use chemical weapons against its own people and did not allow action for any other purpose. I supported intervention on that occasion because the issue was so narrow and so appalling in nature.

"I also believe that we must act to thwart known, planned, violent attacks within our country, and against our citizens elsewhere, even if that means covert surgical military action against clearly identified enemies located within foreign territories. That includes within Syrian borders and the PM was right to authorise such activity this year.

"A case for UK military action to pursue any wider objective in Syria, however, would need to be exceptionally persuasive if it were to win my support. We must continue with our

humanitarian aid, maintain close surveillance for our protection, and assist in working towards a political solution. Anything beyond that is likely to be perilous for our country and futile for Syria in my opinion."

Canterbury's Julian Brazier said: "In my view Michael Fallon hit the nail on the head when he said we have always been clear that IS has to be defeated in Syria and Iraq.

"IS is organised and directed and administered from Syria and there is an illogicality about not being able to do it. The US and others are striking in Syria which means we can play our part in Iraq. I think MPs will want to think about how we best deal with IS."

Vince Maple, the leader of the Labour group on Medway Council, said: "There can be no doubt in anyone's mind the so-called Islamic State, poses real and present risks.

"There have been British citizens tortured and murdered abroad in brutal acts of terrorism. The prime minister has stated the drone strike which killed further British citizens was legally justifiable, necessary and proportionate. Harriet Harman has highlighted the absolute need for appropriate scrutiny of this process by both the counter-terrorism reviewer, and also the intelligence and security committee to examine the evidence."

Ian Driver from Kent's Green Party was opposed, however. He said: "I am not convinced the target posed a clear and imminent danger to national security. I believe this was an illegal act of state sponsored murder which sets a very dangerous precedent."



Ferris wheel row for rink at spa town's historic park



CHILL: Calverley Grounds' popular ice rink faces tough opposition amid fears of spoiling the park's appeal

Fury over council plan to add a Ferris wheel and dodgems to popular festive ice rink in park. **Chris Britcher reports**

PLANS to add a host of attractions to the annual ice rink erected in one of Tunbridge Wells' most picturesque public parks have been slammed as a "Disneyland commercial venture" by angry neighbours.

The spa town has pulled in thousands each Christmas with an ice rink in Calverley Grounds over recent years.

But now organisers, the local council, are keen to capitalise on its popularity by adding a 57ft high Ferris wheel and a large covered arena for dodgems.

It would be set up in November and continue into January. The proposal seeks permission for the next five years – concluding in 2020.

But a number of neighbours living

nearby have opposed the plans citing fears it will turn the town's "green lung" into a "de facto industrial theme park".

Among those complaining is former Conservative council leader, Bob Atwood.

He said: "Whilst I support the idea of improving Christmas season attractions, particularly to support youth activities and the night time economy, I believe that whilst the ice-rink and surrounding market creates an acceptable compromise between disturbance and entertainment, the proposed application goes much too far.

"The resulting fairground, should the application be successful, would not be set in a suitable context. Although convenient for town centre, buses and trains, the park is essential-

ly a tranquil space for the enjoyment of all, and its conversion for nine weeks of the year into a space containing noisy, brightly lit and mechanised entertainment features would be inappropriate and out of place.

"The proposal will inevitably result in severe disturbance and disruption to the immediate neighbours surrounding the grounds. The proposal will also inevitably cause an unacceptable degree of damage to the grounds, which are a showpiece for Tunbridge Wells and would not recover until well into the following spring each year."

Currently, the ice rink has been surrounded by a number of small huts selling various items and food and drink.

In place since 2010, it has pulled in well over 100,000 to use the ice rink alone during its festive stay.

Originally established as part of a co-ordinated bid with the local council to attract crowds into the town centre over the busy Christmas period, the new proposals look to dramat-

ically expand on that.

Planners at Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) will decide on the application over the coming weeks, but neighbours of the park have slammed the proposals, complaining of the noise problems and possible damage to the park itself.

Jane Fenwick, secretary of the Friends of Calverley Grounds, said: "I am very disappointed that TWBC is considering this.

"The ice skating has become a popular and established event in the town's festive calendar largely because of the 'magical' location of the ice rink and is enhanced by lighting in the trees. The dodgems and Ferris Wheel will spoil this and threaten the success of this family-friendly event.

"The resulting cacophony created in the natural amphitheatre of Calverley Grounds every day for nine weeks will be intolerable for local residents, business, hotel residents and visitors to the ice rink.

"The positioning of the dodgems and Ferris wheel will inevitably cause more

damage to the grass areas and verges, making Calverley Ground more unsightly and unusable for park users for months until repairs are made."

Larry Mayers, who lives nearby, added: "I object on many levels, including the resultant change of the immediate living environment of a residential area to a de facto industrial theme park.

"The impact will be on quality of living, noise, parking and ability to make use of a public space that is meant to be open to all. A public space that is a green lung in the centre of Tunbridge Wells, not a Disneyland commercial venture."

The council says it cannot comment on the proposals as they are currently in the planning process.

However, it confirmed the taxpayer would not pay a penny towards the additional facilities.

It added: "The proposed new additions will provide a direct benefit as the owners will be paying a fee to operate there. It also provides related benefits to the local economy."

Dartford Crossing sparks anger

By Sarah Linney

sarah.linney@archant.co.uk

THOUSANDS of people have signed a petition saying congestion around the Dartford Crossing is as bad as ever – despite the toll booths being removed.

The petition set up by motorist Matthew Henry has already gathered more than 7,000 names and demands an “independent investigation” into the changes over the last year, which it had been hoped would ease the problems.

“The redesigned layout is not working. There are perpetual tailbacks, even on a Sunday, and the roads surrounding the tunnel are consistently gridlocked as the overspill from the slip road clogs them,” Mr Henry said.

“The hospital is potentially in harm’s way as ambulances are unable to pass through the chaos.

“There is no way to complain or give opinion on this – but it’s a disgrace.”

After 10,000 signatures the government must respond to the petition – and if it gets 100,000 there will have to be a debate in Parliament.

But there will almost certainly be one before that as local Conservative MP Gareth Johnson is strongly backing the campaigners.

“The approach to the Dartford Crossing is the worst stretch of motorway in the country,” he told KoS.

“It was right to take the toll booths



JAMS: Changes to busy route across the Thames has not eased congestion in and around the town

away, and people have found that coming from Essex into Kent is better, but going northbound there has not been a significant improvement – it’s not producing the kind of traffic flows we believed it would.

“Every time there is a minor problem the roads get snarled up and it causes congestion right across the Dartford area. I have had numerous people contact me exasperated, say-

ing they’ve been unable to pick up their kids or get to and from work.

“We cannot have a situation where people can’t move around from one part of the town to another every time there is a problem at the tunnel.”

He has already met with Highways England – the organisation in charge of England’s motorways – and raised the issue with the Department for Transport, and is planning to raise

it in the House of Commons.

“The issue needs addressing urgently by Highways England – the situation is untenable,” Mr Johnson added.

Dart Charge project director Nigel Gray, from Highways England, said: “The road has only been in its final layout for around a month – the improvement work was completed in July – so it is still too early to assess,

THIRD WAY?

THE timing of the issues around the impact on Dartford comes as the discussion over just where a third crossing should go is set to reach a crescendo.

The two options on the table are either alongside the existing crossing in Dartford – or to the east of Gravesend.

Unsurprisingly, the people of Dartford are opposed to the town once again having the main crossing point on their doorstep, given the already considerable delays it brings to the town.

Meanwhile, both the MPs for Gravesend, Adam Holloway, and Dartford, Gareth Johnson, are calling for the other’s town to be the chosen destination. A decision on where the crossing will be is expected next year.

but we believe the new layout is the right one. And we continually work to fine-tune the new traffic safety system to enable traffic to pass through it as quickly and safely as possible.”

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ROYAL COUPLE: The Queen with Prince Philip

Long to reign

County joins the nation in celebration of Her Majesty the Queen's remarkable feat on Wednesday of overtaking Queen Victoria to become Britain's longest reigning monarch...

Luke May

Luke.May@archant.co.uk

THIS week marked the record-breaking reign of the Queen, as she overtook Queen Victoria as Britain's longest reigning monarch.

On Wednesday at 5.30pm, Her Majesty surpassed her great-great grandmother's record of 63 years and 217 days.

Despite this achievement, the Queen asked for a "business as usual" approach to the week and chose to focus on her duties, in the build up to her 90th birthday celebrations next April.

She did, however, thank the public for their "touching messages of support".

However, praise has come from across Kent's political and social landscape to mark the unique occasion, with MPs, councillors and key figures expressing admiration, for the "steadfast leadership" and "stoic presence" shown by Her Majesty.

The Queen's county representative, the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Viscount De L'Isle said: "Having ruled for over 63 years and seven months, we should thank Her Majesty for her steadfast leadership."

The high sheriff of Kent, William Alexander, whose duties include attending all royal visits, also commended the achievement: "I warmly congratulate her as she passes the landmark of reigning for longer than any previous monarch."

"Her length of service to Britain and the Commonwealth is now unparalleled in history and I join with many others in expressing my

appreciation for her past and ongoing dedicated work."

As it stands now, the Queen is the longest reigning female monarch ever, after acceding to the throne in 1952 and her coronation in 1953, aged 25.

She's a long way off breaking any more records anytime soon though, with Swaziland's Sobhuza II's reign lasting 82 years, and France's King Louis XIV reigning for 72 years across the 17th and 18th centuries.

On the day of her coronation, the silk in Her Majesty's robes was produced at Lullingstone Silk Farm, close to Eynsford, the silk farm also produced silk for the Queen's wedding dress four years before, showing Kent's mark on such grand occasions.

Chairman of Visit Kent and Kent ambassador, Amanda Cottrell OBE, told KoS: "She has this extraordinary presence across three generations of people who've only ever known her as the Queen. Her stoic presence is something we can all look to, in all her years there's never been a complaint, never a reference to her age."

"The affection and even love that people have for her has been demonstrated in the past ten years in her jubilee celebrations - long may she reign."

Since acceding to the throne, she has served 12 prime ministers, while there have been seven Popes and seven Archbishops of Canterbury.

In March, the Queen visited Folkestone, as well as making her eighth visit to Canterbury Cathedral, her fifth since taking the throne.

The visit was a chance to commemorate the opening of the Battle of Britain visitor centre,



over us – Congratulations ma'am!



STEADFAST: Her Majesty has overseen numerous royal events

The Wing, at the National Memorial to the Few, which was opened by the Queen Mother in 1993.

Archive footage available online shows her Highness and the Duke of Edinburgh visiting a Kent oil refinery in 1955, and Her Majesty's affiliation with Kent has lasted through the years.

Kent Police's chief constable Alan Pughsley received the Queen's Police Medal earlier this year in Her Majesty's birthday honours list.

He said: "Every police station in the country has a prominent picture of Her Majesty, and at police social occasions, the loyal toast is drunk to her good health and continued reign."

"I personally have a huge amount of respect and admiration for what she has achieved. I

hope that we have our Queen for many years to come, as she does a magnificent job"

Councillors across the county have similarly sung Her Majesty's praises, with Medway Council leader councillor Alan Jarrett saying: "This is a marvellous achievement by Her Majesty, and a testament to her lifelong commitment to public service.

"She remains an example to us all, and no words are adequate in expressing our admiration for what she does on behalf of Great Britain and the Commonwealth."

Medway's long-standing affiliation with the Queen was perhaps crowned in 1984 when Her Majesty visited Rochester High Street and was greeted by crowds lining the streets.



SMILE: The Queen has served her country for longer than any other monarch – on Wednesday she overtook Queen Victoria's record of 67 years and 217 days



Outside of Medway, the chairman of Kent County Council, Mike Harrison, said "Here at County Hall we marked this occasion with a short presentation on the forecourt of County Hall to offer our sincere best wishes for Her Majesty's continued good health and wellbeing and trust that long may she reign over us."

In 2011, Her Majesty visited Invicta Barracks, where she met the 5,000th Queen's Gurkha Engineer.

MP for Maidstone Helen Grant was at the occasion and has said: "I've had the pleasure of meeting Her Majesty on several occasions.

"For me she is a unique and unsurpassable role model for commitment, self-discipline and stability. She has my utmost respect and

gratitude for a lifetime of service to her people."

MP for Dartford, Gareth Johnson, told KoS of the "nerve-racking" experience of meeting the Queen for the first time.

"Every MP receives the privilege of meeting the Queen and it was for me an incredible but very nerve-racking experience. She is the most respected person in the world and we are extremely lucky as a nation to have her as our Queen.

"I look forward to her continuing her role for many years to come."

Plans are being made ahead of the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations next April, with four events already planned as well as a Royal Windsor Horse Show, further details are to be announced for events in Kent and Medway.

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500	800	859	£86.80	£62.00
500	1000	1015	£96.60	£69.00
500	1200	1240	£105.00	£75.00
500	1600	1638	£166.60	£119.00
500	1800	1882	£180.66	£129.00
600	800	995	£86.80	£62.00
600	1000	1174	£102.20	£73.00
600	1200	1439	£110.60	£79.00
600	1600	1899	£172.20	£123.00
600	1800	2184	£184.87	£133.00



Width mm	Height mm	BTU	List Price	TKM Price
400	800	725	£89.60	£64.00
400	1000	864	£99.40	£71.00
400	1200	1052	£107.80	£77.00
400	1600	1390	£162.00	£116.00
500	800	859	£93.80	£67.00
500	1000	1015	£101.47	£73.00
500	1200	1240	£110.60	£79.00
500	1600	1638	£169.40	£121.00
500	1800	1882	£183.40	£131.00
600	800	995	£92.40	£66.00
600	1000	1174	£105.00	£75.00
600	1200	1439	£166.20	£83.00
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850	480	3	2	£169.95
1050	485	2	3	£199.95



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800	£427.50	£109.00
900	£427.50	£109.00

Size mm	List Price	TKM Clearance Price
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ADVENTURER: Ben Fogle will be on stage. Credit: Martin Hartley.

Adventurer Ben Fogle talks about his life in stage show

The new show will see the presenter discussing his adventures live on stage...

WHEN adventurer Ben Fogle was a child, he dreamt of becoming an actor.

While that particular dream wasn't to be, he has gone on to enjoy a successful TV career.

First appearing on *Castaway* in 2000, he has presented numerous hit programmes on the BBC, ITV and Channel 5 including *New Lives in the Wild* and *Extreme Dreams*.

But now, he has experienced something of a wish fulfilment and will be appearing on stage in his current theatre show.

His one-man event, *Call of the Wild*, will see him talking about his life and adventures.

Mr Fogle will be performing 19 dates around the UK, with the show making its way to Tunbridge Wells next month.

"I always wanted to tread the boards as a child and aspired to be an actor and that didn't work as I was rejected by all the drama schools and so now finally, aged 41, I am going to do my theatre tour," he explained.

"Whenever life becomes too comfortable for me, I need to shake it up and this is the first time I have ever done anything like this.

"I have done talks before but this is going to be a little more theatrical, it's going to be a proper event moment.

"It is sort of sharing my life and adventures with the audience.

"It is the story of where I got to where I am today and how someone who grew up in London ended up working in the furthest, wildest corners of the world and how it's made me the person that I am.

"It will be really nice to actually

go and meet people and hopefully leave them feeling inspired. That's the idea."

As well as his presenting career, Mr Fogle has also undertaken a number of adventures, including rowing across the Atlantic with his best friend, former Olympic oarsman James Cracknell.

And he said that the pair would consider taking on another exciting adventure together in the future.

"I've been doing lots of exciting jobs over the last few years but they have all been for work," he said.

"I think James and I might be ready to team up and try something else and go back to basics like we did all those years ago for our first rowing challenge.

"It won't be rowing but something along the lines of that."

As well as writing his seventh book – *Labrador* – he has been film-

ing six different television shows this year, one of which is *New Lives in the Wild:UK*, a home grown spin-off of his international series, which will focus on extraordinary people, who have swapped the rat race for simpler and more secluded lifestyles in remote parts of the British Isles.

"The UK series has been a real eye opener and I've loved doing it. It's been a fascinating insight and proof that we can live a wild existence here in this country," he said.

"I am really lucky I get to dip into all these places."

The show will be performed at the Assembly Hall Theatre on October 5 at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £21 with a £1.50 booking fee.

For more information, visit www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk or call the box office on 01892 530613.

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Strictly dance duo preparing to perform a final theatre show

by Molly Kersey

molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

DANCE duo Vincent Simone and Flavia Cacace are preparing to dance in their final ever theatre show.

The pair – who have become firm favourites on popular BBC One show *Strictly Come Dancing* – have danced together for some 20 years, becoming world Argentine Tango champions and creating and starring in Olivier award-nominated West End productions in the process.

They will be touring with their new stage show – *The Last Tango* – which they say will help them 'say goodbye to audiences across the UK' as they prepare to take on some new projects.

The show will be performed at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, from October 26 to October 30.

And the pair are looking forward to taking to the stage.

Ms Cacace explained: "We have had such a fantastic time creating and dancing in *Midnight Tango* and *Dance 'Til Dawn*.

"It's an incredible experience to perform live in front of our won-



FAREWELL: Vincent Simone and Flavia Cacace will be dancing in their last ever theatre show.

derful audience night after night, but all good things must come to an end, so we're creating our final ever theatre show.

"It's going to be intimate, emotional and full of our award-winning Argentine tango.

"The Last Tango is going to celebrate our best work and most beautiful dance moves before we finally say farewell to theatre."

Mr Simone added: "The last few

years have been intense – we've loved it.

"It may be our final theatre tour but we're going to go out with a bang. This is going to be our best show yet."

The pair will be joined on stage by Teddy Kempner, Matthew Gent, Callum Clack, Diana Girbau, Rebecca Herszenhorn, Aaron James, Rebecca Lisewski, Jemima Luddy, Ian Oswald and Grant Thresh.

The Last Tango will be directed by Olivier award-winning choreographer and director Karen Bruce and produced by Adam Spiegel Productions.

For more information about the *The Last Tango*, or to book tickets for the show, you can call the ticket office on 01322 220000.

Alternatively you can visit the theatre's website at www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.

Magic of Motown is relived

THE Magic of Motown Reach Out tour will be at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, on October 1 at 7.30pm.

For tickets visit www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk or call 01892 530613.



Dark fairytale in Margate

CREATORS Tortoise in a Nutshell will be returning to Margate's Theatre Royal with their show *The Lost Things* from September 22 to 23.

The dark fairytale is set in a fantastical world and tells the story of a boy who falls and finds himself in a dark and terrifying world.

Call 01843 292795 to book.

Quartet play in Dartford

THE Urban Folk Quartet will be performing at the Dartford Folk Club on November 17 as part of their national tour.

The performance will be starting at 8.30pm.

For details, call 01322 222553.



Bromley does Full Monty

THE stage adaptation of the 1997 film *The Full Monty* will be performed at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, from October 19 to 24.

The show features songs from the film and is written by Simon Beaufoy. It tells the story of six out of work steel workers who start stripping.

To book tickets, visit www.atgtickets.com/bromley.

Leading Christmas party specialist predicts millionth guest booking imminent

The UK's favourite party organiser, Best Parties Ever, has hosted hundreds of thousands of guests at its themed Christmas parties around the UK since it ran its first events in 1999. It now operates in 21 locations and last year, over 170,000 revellers celebrated the festive season with the company.

Best Parties Ever has calculated that within the next few weeks it should take the booking for its one millionth guest. That lucky person (and their whole group) will enjoy their party completely free of charge including entertainment, a four course dinner, drinks and dodgem rides, no matter the size of group and on any night of their choosing.

The prize is open to individuals and companies alike.

Tim Stevens, MD of the Best Parties Ever and all round Christmas party guru says: "It's hard to believe we have nearly reached this amazing milestone, but we really wanted to mark the achievement so it seems only fitting to reward our millionth guest with their best party ever!

"Our clients are a mix of groups of family and friends and companies too so there is no knowing who will be the lucky person, but as we operate in 21 locations across the UK including Maidstone, the winner could be living right here! "

Best Parties Ever's 2015 party season will commence on 26th November and run until 19th December, with prices starting at £42.00 per head.

The locations and themes are:

Newcastle – Chicago, The Roaring Twenties
London, Tobacco Dock – Noel
Watford – Rio Carnival
Bristol – Masquerade Ball
Cheltenham Racecourse – Moonlit in Marrakech
Leeds – Masquerade Ball
Liverpool – Atlantis: Party Under the Sea

Maidstone - Premiere... Red Carpet in the Riviera

Reading - Midnight in Monte Carlo

Swindon – Midnight in Monte Carlo

Windsor - Midnight in Monte Carlo

West London- To Russia With Love

Billerica - Moonlit in Marrakech

Cardiff - Rio Carnival

Farnborough - Italian Masquerade

Leicester – One Night in Bangkok

Manchester – Glamour & Burlesque

Milton Keynes – Dream Circus

Nottingham - Chicago, The Roaring Twenties

Southampton - Chicago, The Roaring Twenties

Weybridge - The Glamour of Paris

www.bestpartiesever.com

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It's Only Fools and Boycie

ONLY Fools and Boycie will be at the Theatre Royal, Margate, on September 26 at 7.30pm. The show will see actor John Challis reveal anecdotes and stories from his career. Call 01843 292795 to book.



Billy Joel hits celebrated

A TOUR celebrating the music of Billy Joel will be performed at the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone. The Billy Joel Songbook, starring Elio Pace, will be performed on October 11 at 7.30pm. The show will feature hits including Uptown Girl and My Life. Visit www.atgtickets.com/folkestone to book.

A show for all the family

FAMILY theatre show Kid Carpet and the Noisy Neighbours will be at the Folkestone Quarterhouse on September 20 at 2.30pm. Visit www.quarterhouse.co.uk to book.



Country singer on stage

IRISH country singer Nathan Carter will be performing at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, on September 20 at 7.30pm. Mr Carter first made his way on to the music scene in 2009 and has recorded six albums so far. To book, visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.

Great day out for all the family at the Southern Model show

by Molly Kersey

molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

THE Southern Model Show will be making its way to Headcorn Aerodrome today (September 13).

The event features an array of model aircraft, helicopters, ships, tanks and other vehicles.

It is aiming to provide something for anyone with an interest in the hobby - whether they are a professional or a beginner.

A wide range of activities will be available for visitors on the day and there will also be a number of traders at the show ground.

Children's amusements, crafts, and food and drink will also be available.

The flying programme will feature the full range of model flying in the UK and Europe.

Battle of Britain themed set pieces will be included in the display, and those new to the hobby will be given the chance to participate for the first time.

On the ground, spectators will be able to enjoy the sight of remote controlled car racing, as well as viewing a number of model tanks



MODELS: There will be flying displays at the event.

along with other armoured fighting vehicles.

As well as this, a water tank will see a number of epic sea battles recreated by model boats.

Speaking ahead of the two-day event, Southern Model Show organiser, Chris Yates, said: "It's going to be a fantastic weekend and we're looking forward to welcoming model enthusiasts and newcomers alike."

He added: "The weekend is about great family fun, boys and girls with their toys and also about inspiring a new generation to take up the hobby."

The show will be taking place in association with the Maidstone Model Flying Club and in partnership with RCME magazine.

The gates to the event will be opening at 9.30am and the flying, sailing and driving displays will be

taking place at both 10am and 5.30pm.

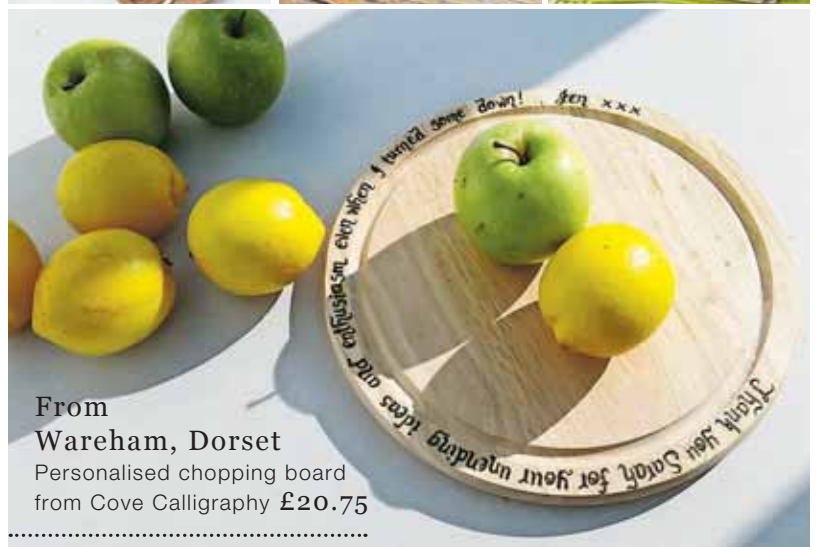
Tickets to the event are £12 for adults and £10 for children.

Family tickets are also available for £35.

For more information about all that the event has to offer and how to book your tickets, visit www.headcornevents.co.uk.

Alternatively you can call 08456526263 to book.

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The Hairy Bikers will be back on the road again

Dave Myers and Si King were at the centre of the action during road trip series Northern Exposure

HAIRY Bikers Dave Myers and Si King were determined to throw themselves into the action while making new BBC Two road trip series Northern Exposure – even if that meant a spot of wife-carrying.

The pair circumnavigated the vast Baltic Sea for the six-part series, which sees them biking and exploring the cuisine of countries including Poland, Sweden, Russia and Finland, where Mr King was persuaded to indulge in a favourite local sport.

"Dave said, 'I think he would like a go at the wife-carrying', and I went, 'Pardon me, WHAT?'" Mr King said. "I disappeared down the boardwalk with this very light and lovely

lady attached to my neck going, 'See you later lads, I am not coming back!'" The trip had been in the pipeline for a few years, but had to be put on hold after Mr King received emergency treatment for a life-threatening brain aneurysm in 2014.

Today, the 47-year-old dad-of-three is recovering well – although he admits he does have to keep an eye on his fatigue levels, given the high-energy nature of the bikers' work.

Mr Myer says getting back on the road with his pal, who he met more than 20 years ago when both were crew members on a TV adaptation of Catherine Cookson's *The Gambling Man*, has been "magic... like putting on a pair of comfy shoes".

"It's better than ever really, be-



PALS: Si King and Dave Myers were happy to get back on the road again.

cause we appreciate it a bit more."

The busy pair have released a new cookbook, *The Hairy Bikers' Meat Feasts*, in which they celebrate meaty recipes, from shepherd's pie and chilli con carne, to pies and curries.

"It's a big book, with more than 150 recipes," said Mr Myers. "We wanted to write the perfect meat book with everything we've learned."

According to Mr King, who's particularly partial to a "proper corned beef, not the tinned stuff", the key to a good meat dish is buying the best quality meat you can.

"I'd rather have one piece of fantastic meat that's been subjected to good husbandry, than have 20 bits of the cheapest mince," he said.

After almost a decade on our

screens – the first series of *The Hairy Bikers' Cookbook* aired in 2006 – the pair are still learning about food all the time.

"We're not trained chefs and we haven't got a restaurant, but we've had the most incredible opportunities to experiment with food," said Mr Myers.

"I often say we must be the two most over-stimulated human beings on the planet," adds Mr King.

"We go from one fantastic thing to another. That's always an enormous privilege."

The *Hairy Bikers' Meat Feasts* is published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson, priced £22 for hardback or £12.99 for the eBook. *The Hairy Bikers' Northern Exposure* is on BBC Two on Tuesday nights.

Treat for Ferrari fans

THE Reynolds Retreat Country Club, near Sevenoaks, will be hosting a Ferrari Owners Club event - showcasing a collection of modern and classic Ferraris.

Former racing driver John Surtees will be appearing during the afternoon, and there will be live music and a silent auction conducted by Autografica.

The event takes place on Saturday (September 19) from midday to 6.30pm.

Sound of the sixties era

A NEW musical will be bringing the sound of the sixties to the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, next month.

The Sensational 60s Experience will be hosted by Alan Mosca from Freddie and the Dreamers, and features five successful performers from the era.

The show is on October 27 at 7.30pm. To book tickets, visit www.atgickets.com/bromley.

Classic ballet returns

CLASSICAL ballet *The Nutcracker* will be performed in Maidstone.

The show tells the story of Clara and her enchanted nutcracker doll and follows their adventures as they combat the Mouse King and journey to the Sugar Plum Fairy's kingdom of sweets.

The *Nutcracker* will be performed at the Hazlitt Theatre on November 14 at 2pm. Call 01622 758611 to book.

Holistic centre is open

FOLLOWING renovation, the Shakra Centre in Charing has now opened.

The holistic centre will now be taking bookings for a number of classes, therapies and events.

The Shakra Centre celebrated its opening with a launch party, featuring stalls, music and activities.

For more information about the centre, visit www.shakracentre.com.

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On track to the Rockies in Canada

TRAVEL REVIEW: Canada

by Michael McHugh

DANGLING only metres above a grizzly bear, whose gaze has locked directly with mine, is not an entirely comfortable experience. As the bear ambles along a rough track, I look down from the safety of my gondola at one of western Canada's premier ski resorts.

"They just think we are big birds," says my guide reassuringly.

This beautiful wilderness east of Vancouver in the Rocky Mountains attracts up to four million visitors a year. The area opened up to tourism more than a century ago with the railway line from the east, and I'm retracing the most scenic part of the route in style, on full-service train The Rocky Mountaineer.

My bear encounter takes place in Banff, Canada's first national park, and is one of the highlights of the trip.

Banff National Park is a World Heritage site covering more than 6,600sq km of Rocky Mountain territory.

Founded in 1883, after workers went looking for gold and instead found hot springs at what is now The Cave and Basin National Historic Site, it became a magnet for tourists and explorers.

Sir William Cornelius Van Horne, who oversaw the building of the spectacular railway line, said: "If we can't export the scenery, we'll import the tourists."

My trip begins when I board the First Passage to the West service in Vancouver. My luggage is transported to overnight hotel accommodation, so I can settle into my carriage.

The Scottish bagpiper send-off reminds me that this railway was founded by a Scotsman and part-financed by Britain's Barings Bank.

Inside my plush carriage, I enjoy



BEAUTIFUL: The area attracts many visitors each year.

merlot and cheese as part of the SilverLeaf service; GoldLeaf - the next class up - offers a la carte dining in a restaurant car and first floor seats for even better views.

Water and fresh fruit is available at all times, supplementing the modestly-sized and beautifully presented portions at meal times.

The outside viewing area, the space between carriages, is tight, with room for two people at a squeeze on

each side - so competition for photo opportunities is fierce.

A cheery young chef called Alistair carefully serves a country scramble of local eggs, cheddar cheese, mushrooms and Canadian bacon, while well-informed staff members provide commentary on the surroundings.

The train, decked out in dark blue and gold paint, traverses "avalanche alley", where rock shed tunnels protect the line from falling boulders.



Pine trees cling to dry slopes forming a stubbly line along ridges.

Some mountainsides are devoid of vegetation, like sci-fi film sets.

A man wields a sledgehammer on a sleeper in the middle of nowhere, evoking visions of rock-breaking pioneers who first laid tracks through this unyielding limestone.

The train makes its way leisurely around long sweeping bends while big horned sheep scamper away, and

TRAVEL FACTS

Michael McHugh was a guest of the Rocky Mountaineer.

Canadian Affair offer a five-night trip to Canada including a journey on the Rocky Mountaineer from £1,209 per person.

Flights will be extra.

For more information you can visit www.canadianaffair.com or alternatively call 020 7616 9184.

it coasts through the isolated ghost town of Walhacine, populated by English gentry and then abandoned at the onset of the Great War.

We approach the city of Kamloops, high on a desert plateau and with a small town feel, where we break up our journey by staying the night, an integral part of passengers' trip, at the Thompson Hotel.

It is a short walk from the centre and close to the tracks, the horns of freight trains audible.

I dine next door that night, in The Noble Pig brewhouse, eating breaded hot peppers and a gloopy mash of potato, melted cheese and beer gravy, washed down with locally-produced Amber Ale.

The second leg of our adventure proves to be even more dramatic.

The train enters spiral tunnels, corkscrewing dramatically through the mountains. Near the Continental Divide, the highest point in North America, the serrated edges of the Rockies protrude, leading to great peaks like Castle Mountain.

We finally arrive at Banff, where I check into the Caribou Lodge & Spa. The inviting Alpine-style hotel combines rustic charm with comforts such as a basement swimming pool.

Film Reviews by Damon Smith



LEGEND
(18, 131 mins) Drama/Romance/Action

TOM Hardy portrays Ronnie and Reggie Kray in Brian Helgeland's portrait of the notorious gangsters.

Using a pair of spectacles to distinguish between the two, Hardy plays Ronnie as a blackly humorous

psychopath and Reggie as a dutiful son. The twins own a club in London, where the rich and famous rub shoulders with criminals. With guidance from business manager Leslie Payne, the club goes from strength to strength and the brothers entertain a transatlantic union with organised crime boss Meyer Lansky.

In the capital, the Krays continue a turf war with Charlie Richardson and remain one step ahead of Detective Superintendent Leonard 'Nipper' Read. Reggie embarks on a romance with 16-year-old Frances Shea, the sister of his driver. This coincides with Ronnie's affair with Edward Smith.

Sibling rivalry intensifies and Reggie struggles to contain his brother's sadistic impulses.

MAZE RUNNER: THE SCORCH TRIALS
(12A, 131 mins) Action/Sci-Fi

THE first chapter of The Maze Runner culminated with Thomas, Newt, Teresa, Minho, Frypan and Winston being airlifted to safety from a facility belonging to the World Catastrophe Killzone Department (WCKD). The teenagers arrive at a fortified research compound where Janson and his team care for the runners, keeping them safe from WCKD and its lead physician, Ava Paige.

Thomas learns the maze runners hold the key to a cure for the Flare contagion, which has ravaged the globe and reduced humanity to flesh-hungry predators known as Cranks.

When Janson fails to provide the answers that Thomas needs to hear, he spearheads an escape with loner Aris. The teenagers flee into the wilderness where they come face-to-face with the Cranks and forge an uneasy alliance with gung-ho Brenda and her surrogate



father.

CONTAINMENT
(15, 77 mins) Drama

FAILED artist Mark discovers he no longer has any water supply or electricity to his flat and glue has been poured around the frame of his front door, sealing him inside. He sees mysterious figures in

protective suits patrolling the grounds and snatching residents from their flats. He struggles to come to terms with what he is seeing, as neighbours Sergei and Sally burst into the flat by knocking a hole in the wall and Enid follows soon after. They discover there is something nasty in the air and the threat might not be the men in orange hazmat suits after all.

If you noticed space in your borders this year, or some of your more established plants didn't flower as well as they have done previously, autumn is one of the key seasons to propagate.

Division is among the easiest and most effective ways to increase your stock. It involves carefully digging up clumps of perennials, which have either outgrown their allotted space or are no longer performing well. You'll need to prise the root ball apart to become smaller clumps, each with a healthy section of roots attached.

Some perennials are simpler to divide. Crocosmias, rudbeckias, heleniums and hardy geraniums are pretty easy. You need to cut off the flowering stems and dead leaves, dig up the clump, keeping the root system intact and then pull the plant into pieces from the outside, where there is young growth, making sure you have a healthy section of roots attached. Replant the divided clumps in soil with compost and water in.

For larger clumps, push two garden forks back to back into the centre and prise clumps apart. Discard the centre sections and replant the more vigorous outer sections. Perennials with tougher roots, like hostas and hellebores, may take a bit more effort.

Other plants suitable for division include phlox, sedum, delphinium, campanula, aster and achillea.

Another way to boost your stock is by taking semi-ripe cuttings in early autumn using this year's young shoots that have started to go woody



REPLENISH: Some tips on how to propagate.

How to boost your plant stock

at the base. Plants suitable for semi-ripe cuttings include many evergreen and deciduous shrubs, including lavender, box, hebe, berberis and potentilla. They may take longer to root than softwood cuttings.

Select 10cm-long shoots from a non-flowering stem with a woody base and soft tip, cutting just below a leaf joint and removing the lower

leaves from the bottom third of the shoot. Trim the base with a sharp knife, leaving a small piece attached. Dip the tip into hormone rooting powder, then put six cuttings around the edge of a 12cm pot filled with 50 per cent seed compost and 50 per cent sharp sand or perlite, watering in well and leaving to drain.

Place the container of cuttings in a

greenhouse, or cover pots with a clear plastic bag and put them in a warm, light position out of direct sunlight, and keep the compost moist but not sodden. If the weather turns chilly, use a heated propagator in the greenhouse at night. Hopefully, cuttings should have rooted by the following spring.

Layering is another way to increase

your stock and is an ideal method for propagating rhododendrons, azaleas and hybrid clematis. Essentially, it induces rooting from the parent plant without cutting the shoots off. Bend one of the branches down to the ground, remove the leaves around the tip of a healthy shoot and then cut a slit in the nearby stem without completely severing it.

Bridge Haven Care Home

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Bridge Haven care home provides care with compassion for those living with dementia. The home offers care and comfort, but also introduces a new, positive and more engaging stage in the lives of its residents who live there.

The team of attentive, experienced and skilled staff provide 24 hour care in a pleasant, homely environment. Services provided at Bridge Haven include full time residential care, day care and short term respite care known as the homes 'My Time'service.

All rooms at Bridge Haven are bright and cheerful with many bedrooms having en-suite facilities providing relaxation and a sense of well-being.

Other facilities include the 'Snug' - a pub like facility for residents to enjoy and socialise and Gregory's tea room, situated in one of the two attractively laid gardens.

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Refugees: You are welcome

CANTERBURY is not a poor place. Although we have areas of great need, there are those whose needs are even greater.

Indeed, it often seems the poorest and most vulnerable in society have the most empathy with those even less fortunate.

After the wonderful response from local people to the fire on the old tannery site recently, I am sure that Canterbury's residents would be able to find help and space for refugees.

They are ordinary people, like us, escaping from horrors we cannot imagine. Let us welcome them and take them in to our hearts and homes, as our parents and grandparents did in the past.

Mary Kerr,
 Rough Common

Show we care by opening doors

ORDINARY people need to stand together and express to the government and local councils that for many of us keeping refugees out of the UK is inhumane.

If any of us were fleeing persecution, war and death we would expect to travel to safer climates, so what is the difference with these people? None that I can see, except that they speak a different language.

We in the UK are just fortunate and we should show our true compassion and open up our hearts and let these people in. All this scaremongering about using up scarce resources - please! The UK is one of the 10th wealthiest countries, but has become more selfish as it has increased in wealth.

Yvonne Christie,
 Ramsgate

Recycling hits water pressure

AS A person for whom recycling has become practically an obsessive compulsive disorder, I found the article on recycling of great interest.

However, I am disappointed that some councils are taking such a hard line about what should go in which bin, as there are any number of reasons why items can end up in the wrong bin, without any wilful intent on the part of those of us trying to do our bit.

That said, of most concern to me

LETTER OF THE WEEK



We need action now on Manston fiasco

FOR the past 16 months, Save Manston Airport has been campaigning to have Manston developed as a cargo-based commercial airport and, on the back of overwhelming support via the local and general elections, we have seen some progress – albeit very slow progress.

We know that Thanet District Council is in the process of putting in place a Compulsory Purchase Order for acquisition of the airport, and we know that a highly-rated US company, RiverOak (RO), has put forward a viable business plan for its development but, sadly, we know also that TDC is asking RO for unnecessary financial demands at this early stage and that the cabinet has so far failed to even meet with this major investor.

A while ago, council leader Chris Wells indicated we should see progress "within weeks" rather than months, ie towards the end of July, but here we are a full six weeks on with no answers

and no visible signs of any real progress being made since his announcement.

All the time this has been going on, the current owners are seeking to build thousands of houses on the site contrary to the will of the electorate. Building that many dwellings requires a vast investment in infrastructure, services and utilities, which is not mentioned in the glossy brochures.

We demand that Cllr Wells and Madeleine Homer come clean and publish the road map for the CPO, showing its status and what hurdles, if any, need to be overcome. If they remain silent, it will only serve to fuel speculation that there is another agenda on the table that does not support the CPO. Better still, hold a public meeting like they're doing for plans for homes in nearby Birchington.

Roy Davies
 Folkestone

day, and with the programme of water metering across the county now well under way, that could lead to costly increased consumption.

Christopher Hudson-Gool,
 Maidstone

We need a waste plan rethink

YOUR article on recycling was most illuminating.

The difference between Medway and the other councils mentioned, is that Medway is a unitary

council, which means it is responsible for collecting and disposing of waste.

The rest of Kent has a ludicrous division of services in that KCC disposes of waste and the districts collect it... and guess what?

In order to save money they all game the system, by trying to make short term economies; while adding complications to what is a fairly routine matter.

District managers blame the residents for failing to comply with a complicated recycling scheme that requires a lot of input by those residents (you will note that I do not call them 'customers').

Supermarkets do this by self service till and in 'managerialist' Kent, the advent of multiple plastic boxes is along the same lines; as it is designed to reduce labour costs.

It also fails to take note of the fact that many dwellings cannot adequately house all these boxes, and where it is possible, it blights the built environment of many neighbourhoods.

An alternative would be to have two bins, one large one for clean and one smaller one for dirty waste.

The dirty one would go to incineration, so that KCC can meet its obligation with the incinerator operator and the clean bin could go to a central recycling centre for Kent.

This would cut down on contamination and may sort waste into higher quality material getting a higher price in the process.

A recycling centre would cost several million, but incineration is not cheap and if we can afford one the other is surely possible.

G Nokes,
 via email

Just what do you have faith in?

CHRISTOPHER Hudson-Gool has now let the cat out of the bag as to what he and Ray Duff are striving to promote, although one has for long suspected it.

By saying that it is "a matter of belief" whether God has given us free-will, it is obvious that they are both seeking to promote atheism.

Both Mr Hudson-Gool and Mr Duff should both perhaps ask themselves the question as to what happens if God does exist after all?

In that case, neither the existence nor the works of God are mere questions of what one believes (although atheism does then become "a matter of belief").

Nobody can "un-exist" God simply by means of unbelief.

John Humphrey,
 Sevenoaks

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- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.
- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.



Quex Park, Birchington by **Thomas Murphy, Broadstairs**

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SUPERMINI: The Jazz offers a Tardis-like huge inside and compact outside proposition to its buyers, who are loyal and make up 40 per cent of Honda's UK sales



Jazz variations on supermini theme

PREVIEW: As the name always implied, the Honda Jazz is more than just another supermini - the latest has even more verve...

HONDA'S Jazz has never been about competing with everyone else's supermini, but delivering on a different theme.

It appeared in 2002, a cross between a supermini and an MPV, a Tardis - huge inside and compact outside.

There have been imitators, of course, but the 2008-vintage Mk2 and the Mk3 arriving now (from £13,495) have pushed the cabin space and flexibility envelope even further.

Length is up by 95mm, but Honda says the new-comer is proportionally even bigger inside than before, with class-leading boot space now claimed - 354 litres with rear seats up and 897 litres in 'seats down' mode.

It's not just the space, but Honda's unique 'Magic Seat' system: the rear seat bases hinge upwards, allowing further loading permutations or extra underseat stowage.

Prices are not cheap - Honda positions itself as a mainstream/premium brand - but kit is generous, so all models come with air con, cruise control with speed limiter, auto lights and Honda's 'City-Brake Active' to help avoid low-speed accidents.

The best deal is SE spec (£14,595) which adds front and rear parking sensors, electrically adjustable and heated door mirrors and 15-inch alloys.

There's no choice on engine: Honda has never



fitted a diesel in its smallest car and the all-new 102PS (100bhp) 1.3 litre i-VTEC petrol unit is a deliberate 'one size fits all' development, claimed to offer the sprightly driving performance of the previous 1.4 litre engine, plus the old 1.2's better fuel economy.

Not that the Jazz is expected to attract keen

drivers: the versatility of the high body always worked against the car's handling, heeling a little on the bends, but the model claims 40 per cent of Honda's UK sales, with many to serial Jazz buyers, all presumably happy too with Honda's enviable reputation for customer satisfaction and reliability.

Insignia - 'whisper' quiet by design

Vauxhall's flagship and big company car favourite does everything with whispering style and mechanicals in a tough market, writes **Steve Loader...**

WANT a bit of hush? Go for a Vauxhall Insignia with a 'whisper diesel'. Already touted as the most aerodynamic car in its class, the latest Insignia not only slips quietly through the air, but also powers itself with decorum thanks to the General Motors brand's new diesel line-up.

Nor do these powertrains make a big impact on the pocket; I've been driving the powerful yet frugal 2.0 CDTi 170PS (168bhp) which delivers 0-62mph in nine seconds yet has an official combined 62.8mpg.

Whatever the whys and wherefores of 'official' consumption figures, that's impressive for such a big and spacious car.

And it helps keep the Insignia competitive, along with those slippery good looks: the car arrived in 2009 and deservedly landed the coveted European Car of the Year Award before attacking Ford's traditional domination of the mainstream family/company car segment. The Ford Mondeo has since been consistently behind the big Vauxhall in the sales race.

With more style and on-road presence, the Insignia has also done



a pretty good job in shackling the BMW 3 Series' overall leadership of the sector; the German car remains the star though, thanks to its premium badge and gold-plated resale values.

That's not to say that the Insignia is cheap and cheerful or even mainstream; Vauxhall has worked

hard to give its cars a more premium feel, and the quality of fit and finish is high after a major facelift in 2013, also delivering more precise handling, even if the Insignia's natural home is more motorway than windy rural lanes.

That's reflected well in the test car: a Techline trim model aimed mainly



at the mileage-chomping company car driver, though the value for money specification will also appeal to private buyers.

The Insignia dashboard is well-ordered for the 'working driver' too, much simplified by the facelift, with fewer buttons and more intuitive operation of common

Vauxhall Insignia 5dr Techline 2.0 CDTi

Price:	from £22,984
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Ford Mondeo

functions such as air con and infotainment - there's a big eight-inch, high-resolution colour touchscreen on most models - while the instrument cluster has new dials and a fresh, high-tech look.

However, for a big car, the Insignia is not the most space-efficient inside. The middle rear seat is compromised by legroom and the big, elegant Sport Tourer (estate) is not the most capacious load lugger in this class.

But the Insignia remains one of the most stylish and easy to live with big cars and it's perhaps not surprising that virtually the same car sells in North America, helping GM's Buick brand recapture some of its old dynamism and attract new and younger buyers.

The next generation Insignia - up to 18 months away - is tipped to carry over much of the current car's looks.



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Fuel consumption figures for new Fiat 500 range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 51.4 (5.5) - 65.7 (4.3); Extra Urban 65.7 (4.3) - 83.1 (3.4); Combined 60.1 (4.7) - 74.3 (3.8). CO₂ emissions 110 - 88 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO₂ figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

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Adults Only
Entertainment



New Year at Bosworth Hall Hotel, Leicestershire

30 December, 2015 • 3 nights half board, **£249pp** • Quote: NB12-KOS

Join us for a super New Year break at a country house hotel in the heart of England. This self-drive break is for adults only and includes meals and entertainment.

The venue is Bosworth Hall Hotel, in the village of Market Bosworth, a few miles from Leicester.

The hotel is a grade 2-listed building dating back to the 17th century set in

11 acres of landscaped gardens. The imposing sweep of the hall's main staircase has intricately carved banisters bearing baskets of fruit and flowers. The main hall is panelled in oak and boasts a stunning Tudor stone fireplace. Large windows give the rooms a light and airy aspect and overlook breathtaking views of the gardens and moat.

You'll enjoy a welcome drink on arrival with an opportunity to meet the staff.

INCLUDED 3 nights stay at Bosworth Hall Hotel sharing a twin/double bedded room with en-suite facilities • 3 breakfasts, 2 dinners and 1 Gala Hogmanay buffet • Entertainment every evening

Original 70s band Brotherhood of Man



Pontins Pakefield

Free Drinks
£10pp deposit
Entertainment
Over 40s only

Christmas Cracker Party through the Decades

20 November, 2015 • 3 nights half board-plus, **£129pp** • Quote: CC11-KOS

Join us for an over 40s Christmas party weekend to remember as we re-wind the decades and go back to the 60s, 70s and 80s at Pontins Pakefield, by the sea near Lowestoft, Suffolk. Enjoy live music from original 70s band Brotherhood of Man, 60s rockers The Swinging Blue Jeans and the new touring show Whitney – Queen of The Night. Add 3 Free Drinks per person per night and you've got the perfect recipe for a great party weekend.

INCLUDED: 3 Free drinks every night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • Full entertainment programme • 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrade available • Towels & linen

The Merseybeats



The Ivy League



We Love the 60s Spring Party Weekend

11 March, 2016 • 3 nights half board-plus, **£129pp** • Quote: PS3-KOS

Join us at Pontins Pakefield, on the Suffolk coast, for a Spring Party - for over 40s only - to blow away the winter cobwebs. We've lined up a brilliant entertainment showbill featuring The Ivy League, The Merseybeats and The Pacemakers plus tributes to The Beach Boys and The Beatles. With non-stop entertainment from Friday evening to Sunday evening and free drinks every night, this is one party weekend you're sure to love.

INCLUDED: 3 Free drinks per person per night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • Full 60s theme entertainment programme • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • 3 nights en-suite chalet accommodation - upgrade available



£1 Drinks • Entertainment
Over 40s only • £10pp deposit

Worthing Winter Warmer Party - Chatsworth Hotel

29 Jan & 5 Feb, 2016 • 2 nights half board-plus, **£129pp** • Quote: WG1/2-KOS

Join us in Worthing for a Winter Warmer Party and enjoy £1 drinks and live entertainment every night. The Chatsworth is one of the finest hotels on the south coast, just a stone's throw from the sea and a short stroll to the town centre. All bedrooms are en-suite and a lift services all floors.

INCLUDED: £1 drinks from 7pm to 10pm both evenings - pint of house beer or small glass of wine • 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts • Live nightly entertainment • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV & free wifi



The Fourmost



Free Drinks • £10pp deposit
Entertainment • Over 40s only
Car Ferry included



Warner Bembridge

Back to the 60s Carry on New Year Party

8 January, 2016 • 3 nights half board-plus, from **£229pp** • Quote: BP1-2-KOS

Join us for a private New Year party at Warner Bembridge Coast Hotel on the Isle of Wight as we extend the festivities into January and take you on a trip back to the 1960s. Our exclusive weekend, designed specially for the over 40s generation, includes a gala New Year's Eve party PLUS Free Drinks every night from 6pm-midnight. The entertainment line-up features authentic 60s Bands The Fourmost and Union Gap, plus a tribute to Dusty Springfield.

INCLUDED: Free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night - beers - house lager, bitter and cider; branded spirits including Smirnoff, Bacardi, Bells, Gordon's Gin, Courvoisier, Lamb's Navy Rum, Martini & Harveys Bristol Cream Sherry; wine by the glass; draught soft drinks and cordials • 3 dinners and 3 breakfasts • 1960s themed live nightly entertainment • 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrades to main hotel available • Return car ferry crossing Portsmouth-Fishbourne or Lymington-Yarmouth



2-for-1 Drinks • Entertainment
Over 40s only • £10pp deposit

Carry on New Year Party at Bosworth Hall

29 January, 2016 • 2 nights half board-plus, **£119pp** • Quote: BW1-KOS

Extend your New Year celebrations at Bosworth Hall Hotel, in the village of Market Bosworth near Leicester. Our popular private party weekends have become a must-do annual event with guests returning year after year. We've arranged a super entertainment line-up for our Party Break, including tributes to Frankie Valli, The Eagles and Kenny & Dolly. You will also enjoy 2-for-1 drinks both nights.

INCLUDED: 2-for-1 drinks from 7pm to 11pm both nights • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV & tea/coffee tray • 2 dinners & 2 breakfasts • Full programme of live entertainment both nights • Free use of leisure facilities (indoor pool & gym)



Dance champions
Richard &
Morgan



Dance tuition
with Philip Wylie

Free Drinks • £10pp deposit
Entertainment • Over 40s only
Car Ferry included

Come Dancing Carry on New Year Party

8 January, 2016 • 3 nights half board-plus, from **£279pp** • Quote: BP1-3-KOS

Dance enthusiasts can enjoy dance tuition, dance cabaret, social dancing, a Gala Ball and much more at our Carry on New Year party weekend at Warner Bembridge Coast Hotel on the Isle of Wight. Six Times UK Ten Dance Champions Richard Still and Morgan Hemphill will dance 2 evening sessions for us and also provide a Latin workshop. Dance tuition - up to 8 hours - is by Philip Wylie of Ballroom & Latin Dance specialists **Holiday & Dance**. There are reserved tables and seating exclusively for a maximum of 200 dance guests who also have access to the show lounge with our super 60s entertainment line-up.

INCLUDED: Free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night • 3 dinners and 3 breakfasts • Live nightly entertainment • Social dancing • Dance demonstrations and tuition • Gala New Year's Eve Ball • 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrades to main hotel available • Return car ferry crossing Portsmouth-Fishbourne or Lymington-Yarmouth

Private Events - You cannot book these self-drive breaks direct with the hotels/resorts



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Women Seeking

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PAT, 68, young at heart, slim, proud 4' 11" GSOH, N/S, likes walking etc. Whistable area, seeks similar, slim easy going male 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 4292 Box 418117

MARIE, very lonely middle-aged woman, looking for a kind hearted older man, late 70s/early 80s for friendship/companionship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418955

DISCREET man wanted by married lady for no strings fun. I'm called Sarah and am 37yrs. Pls call, ACA Tel No: 0906 515 4299 Box 418167

RACHEL late 40s, blonde, blue eyes and very voluptuous. Looking for a kind, caring honest man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418741

ANNA, busty mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. Tel No: 0906 515 4295 Box 366019

ESSEX lady, mid 60s, adaptable, seeking nice male, likes most things. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418537

MAUREEN, discreet sensual lady, 42yrs seeks daytime fun at her home. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 4275 Box: 405297

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243

LAUREN, 32yrs, recently divorced, own home and 2 kids seeks single dads or older chap. Text only to Mailbox No: 4127590

FEMALE, 59, GSOH, many interests, seeks caring male for fun friendship maybe more, genuine calls only. Text only to Mailbox No: 481973

KAREN, 51yrs, never been married and does not want to be! Just wants a nice kind hearted chap for dates, texts etc. Text only to Mailbox No: 4032409

GORGEOUS flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417435

FEMALE easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417603

SUSIE fit, friendly, looking for someone to love and look after me, preferably older, N/S male with own car. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392537

HAPPY young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383

KATIE, 5ft 5, slim dark hair, very attractive female, likes most things in life and a good laugh, looking for a similar male. Text only to Mailbox No: 4722127

NICE female looking for decent genuine male for friendship to start out with. Text only to Mailbox No: 4710874

BLONDE female, 5ft 1ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, walks, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 490925

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

ATTRACTIVE lady early 50s, petite, Scandinavian blonde professional, WLTW professional, caring, gent, 50-60s for attention and future together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416559

RACHEL attractive, blonde, blonde, voluptuous, seeking kind, honest, generous kind male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418403

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

ALISON 39, petite with long brown hair, hazel eyes, very loving, seeking similar male for an uncomplicated relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418519

LISA attractive petite Filipino female, very lonely, wanting to find love, companionship and to be happy, looking for friendship and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415549

SUE 65, 5ft 8ins, blonde hair, fashionable, smoker, GSOH, enjoys meals out, travel, animals, WLTW kind, shyish man for friendship, maybe more. Thanet area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415735

BLACK lady 43, sincere, down to earth, fun loving, likes theatre, cinema, meals out, walks, seeking white gent with GSOH, sincere and down to earth. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415477

ATTRACTIVE black, athletic lady, varied interests, seeks similar white, old fashioned, genuine male for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416215

MAY sexy black African female, 38, hardworking, seeks generous friendly male for mutual rewarding friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416211

RICHARD 59 from East Kent. WLTW genuine female 50 plus for friendship. Text only to Mailbox No: 4448765

ALAN, 49yrs, kind chap with own building business, been broken hearted and seeks kind caring lady, looks unimportant. Text only to Mailbox No: 4105813

MALE 56 yrs, GSOH, n/s, would like to meet a lady to have happy times, lots of love to give, to enjoy good times in and out. Text only to Mailbox No: 4181244

MIKE from Canterbury 57, medium build, GSOH, varied interests, sign language interpreter, seeks slim female, 21-42 for LTR. Single mum welcome. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379673

SINGLE young lady, slim-medium build, 24-38 sought by mature male in Canterbury. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697

MIKE Canterbury mature male, seeks single mum/lady, 28-42, slim-medium build for loving, caring relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415275

MALE, 39, tall, hardworking, 6ft 2, looking for long-term lover/older woman. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418877

WRITER tall, slim, dark hair, generous, seeking broadminded lady for fun times. Any age/status. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412749

SUGAR Daddy available! Mature, tall, slim, natural dark hair, seeks lady, age unimportant. Not afraid of commitment. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418899

SARAH 29yr old pretty slim single mum of one, interesting, lively, good fun, enjoys nights in/out, music, seeking similar easy going, genuine, honest man/dad to get to know. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415841

ANGIE attractive nurse 39yrs, new to area/advertising, likes dog walking, being sociable, meals in/out, WLTW honest, fun male for possible fr. looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415827

JOYCE 39, attractive GSOH, loves nights out, honest, loyal, fun to be with, looking for mature male for adult companionship, meals out and hopefully more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415561

NICOLETTE 32 petite professional attractive black female looking for similar hardworking white male who like me loves life and is serious about finding a LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415545

PAT blonde blue eyed curvy, cuddly female, attractive, likes swimming, gardening, holidays, my job/home, looking for happiness with quiet content grounded male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415533

JOHN young 50, tall, slim, hardworking, seeking business/professional female for discreet meetings, can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418461

JONATHAN good looking, considerate, long curly hair, N/S, seeks tall, slim female, 30-45. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418451

BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611

YOUNG 64yr old male, slim, GSOH, adventurous, outgoing, likes most things, seeks easygoing, laidback, open-minded lady for friendship and good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 399539

ASHFORD male, 66, GSOH, easy going, smoker, down to earth, adventurous, seeks like-minded female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416845

55YR old male, 5ft 9ins, slim, likes swimming, pool, seeking female for fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418257

JOHN nice looking, brown curly hair, gentle, understanding, seeks tall, slim lady for daytime no strings fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418207

BRIAN happy go lucky, genuine, loving, likes nights in, DVDs, meals out, seeking genuine lady for loving, caring relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418197

GARY 48, 6ft, well-built, dark hair, brown eyes, seeks passionate female for fun times in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387175

VINCENT 48, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun nights in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 373797

HAPPY go lucky divorced man, 48, 6ft, well built, seeks gorgeous female to share love and laughs with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 383719

JOHN 49, 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights in/out seeks loving female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404013

PAUL 49, 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights in/out seeks loving female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404013

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MALE 70's, fit, looking for lady to share life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416663

HARRY 50, ex soldier, 6ft, well built, seeking lady to wine and dine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417015

MALE 57, seeking honest, reliable, genuine lady for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418535

69YR old male, professional, 5ft 10ins, fit, medium build, young outlook, reliable, sincere, likes most things, seeks slim, slender, uncomplicated lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418531

RICHARD 63, N/S, clean-shaven, likes meals out, days out, classic cars, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418517

JOHN young 50, tall, slim, hardworking, seeking business/professional female for discreet meetings, can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418461

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BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611

YOUNG 64yr old male, slim, GSOH, adventurous, outgoing, likes most things, seeks easygoing, laidback, open-minded lady for friendship and good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 399539

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- will be familiar with the use of ICT resources and teacher resources.

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Interviews: Week Commencing 28th September 2015

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Salary: £16,482.75 per annum

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- Excellent IT Skills
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- Experience in the health sector desirable

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact:

Danielle Edwards, Business Office Supervisor, on 01304 245955 or Danielle.edwards@spencerhospitals.com

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Salary: £16,171.66 per annum

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- Exceptional Customer Service skills
- Excellent communication skills both verbal and written
- Ability to learn quickly and confidently communicate service information
- Highly organised

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact:

Caroline McKean, OPD Admin Supervisor on 01843 234372

For a job description and application form please visit www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers

Alternatively, please contact Justine Whittle, HR Assistant

Telephone: 01304 222684

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Required for November 2015

FULL TIME LECTURER IN ENGINEERING, MECHANICAL BIAS
 To teach Key Stage 4 & 5 (qualified to level 3 minimum, welding desirable)

FULL TIME LECTURER IN WELDING AND FABRICATION

To teach Key Stage 4 & 5 (qualified to Level 3 minimum, knowledge of Mechanical Engineering lecturing desirable)

Salary c. £28,500-32,500 pa (dependent on qualifications and experience)

Required for January 2016

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Salary c. £29,500-33,500 pa (dependent on qualifications and experience)

The Swale Skills Centre is a 'state of the art' post 16 training College providing Electrical, Electronics and Engineering training up to level 3. We look forward to welcoming applications from committed practitioners who want to be part of a dynamic, thriving and highly successful team. Results last year saw record numbers of students achieving and exceeding expected levels of progress.

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<https://www.swaleacademiestrust.org.uk>

Please note - we cannot accept CVs without an application form

Mrs S Rivett (Personnel Manager), Sittingbourne Community College
 Swanstree Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4NL

or Email: personnel@sittingbourne.kent.sch.uk

Tel: 01795 472449 Fax: 01795 470332

Swale Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This post is subject to an enhanced DBS Disclosure.

Closing date: 18/09/2015 Interviews: 24/09/2015

Swale Academies Trust Registered Office: Ashdown House, Johnson Road
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KENT LIFE

APPLICATION TO FOR THE GRANT OF A PREMISES LICENCE

Notice is hereby given that we Marpaal Sport CIC Ltd, have applied to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council for a new premises licence in respect of the premises known as Cobdown Sports and Recreation Centre, Station Road, Ditton, Aylesford, Kent ME20 6AU to permit the following licensable activities: -

- Sale of Alcohol
- Regulated Entertainment
- Provision of Late Night Refreshment

The application can be viewed at the offices of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent. ME19 4LZ during normal office hours. www.tmbc.gov.uk/licensing

Any representations must be made in writing to the above local authority, clearly stating the grounds upon which representation is made relevant to the Licensing Act by 2nd October 2015

The Licensing Authority must receive representations by the date given above. Representations must relate to one or more of the four licensing objectives: THE PREVENTION OF CRIME AND DISORDER, PUBLIC SAFETY, THE PREVENTION OF PUBLIC NUISANCE, and OR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM HARM.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and the maximum fine, level 5 on the standard scale, is a maximum of £5,000 for which a person is liable on summary conviction for the offence.

Stephen Thomas LAW, 8 Grassmere, Leybourne, West Malling, Kent ME19 5QP

Authorised Agents on and behalf of the applicant.

Notice of Application for the Grant of a Premises Licence (Licensing Act 2003)

Notice is hereby given that ZAHEDUL ISLAM has applied to Ashford Borough Council for the GRANT of PREMISES LICENCE for Late night refreshment only, trading 23.00 to 05.00 Monday to Sunday inclusive for the premises Flame Grill Restaurant situated at 13 High Street, Ashford, Kent TN24 8TH

A register of licensing applications can be viewed at the Licensing Section, Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1PL 01233 330721 by appointment.

Any person wishing to submit representations to this application must give notice in writing to the address shown above, giving in detail the grounds of objection by 06 / 10 / 2015

Dated 8th September 2015

Signed ZAHEDUL ISLAM

The Council will not entertain representations where the writer requests that his identity remains anonymous. Copies of all representations will be included in the papers presented to the Licensing Panel and will therefore pass into the public domain. Representations must relate to one or more of the four Licensing Objectives: THE PREVENTION OF CRIME AND DISORDER, PUBLIC SAFETY, THE PREVENTION OF PUBLIC NUISANCE AND THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM HARM.

It is an offence, liable on conviction to a fine up to level 5 on the standard scale (£5000), Under Section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003 to make a false statement in or in connection with this application.

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Christopher Leach & Paul Leach trading as S W Leach & Sons of 9 Western Road, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8NE is applying to change an existing license as follows

To add an operating centre to keep 2 vehicles and 0 trailers at Noble House, Brickmakers Ind Est, Castle Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3RL

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be effected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

HOSTEAD Diane

Passed peacefully away on 2nd September 2015.

A much loved mother and grandmother who will be sadly missed by family and friends.

Funeral service to be held on Monday 21st September 12 noon at Thanet Crematorium.

Family flowers only. Donations if so desired to Viking Day Unit c/o Maskell & Uden, 74-76 Hardres Street, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 8QP. 01843 850042.

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CHAMPION: Kiern Jewiss in action at the British Kart Grand Prix

Pictures: CHRIS WALKER

Kart sensation on the road to glory

Kiern Jewiss, 13, is "better than Lewis Hamilton", says coach

Motorsport

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

A TEENAGE karting sensation from Harrietsham is "better than Lewis Hamilton," according to his coach.

Kiern Jewiss, 13, is looking to follow in the footsteps of the two-time world champion and already looks to be on track to success.

The teenager is the current Grand Prix champion after being taken under the wing of Formula One legend Mark Blundell and his team.

Coach Kieren Clark said: "I've never seen anyone as good as Kiern. He's better than Lewis Hamilton when he was at the same age. He is doing a re-

ally good job and has improved massively in his driving.

"Kiern understands how to race, how to approach corners and how not to crash when doing so, which is obviously important."

According to Kiern's mother, Dorne, karting has always been in her son's veins: "Even from a young age he always had an interest in anything with an engine. He was seven when he first tried karting and then started racing at eight at Buckmore Park. I've seen him grow in confidence since then and we're very pleased with his progression. He's a confident young lad with a quirky personality."

Kiern is tutored at home once or twice a week depending on his racing commitments, but still regularly attends Swadelands School in Lenham, where Mrs Jewiss says he is very well

supported, as he is by former F1 race Mark Blundell. She added: "He has a lot of help from Mark. It's brilliant to have that kind of support from someone like him. He's very friendly, great with Kiern and we have a good chat whenever we see him," she said.

Clark praised the maturity of Kiern off the track - traits he believes are crucial when looking to go to the very top: "He's got an eye for it, he can think methodically, he's very old before his time. He's a very funny lad with lots of confidence, but not in an arrogant way.

"I have conversations with him and it's not like I'm talking to a 13-year-old, it's more like he's 18 or 19. He understands what we are talking about, does his own research and comes up with his own ideas. For someone of his age, that's very rare."

Edinburgh hails Gills spirit after strong start

GILLINGHAM boss Justin Edinburgh has praised the togetherness of his squad after their excellent start to the season.

The Gills soared to the top of the League One table following a 1-0 win over Doncaster and the most successful opening month in the club's history.

Edinburgh said his players deserve a lot of credit for the start they have made and says everybody at the club are united as they look to push forward.

At his mid-week press conference, he said: "They are a real close knit group and have a real trust and belief in one another and have had to overcome a number of problems of late in terms of injuries in a short space of time.

"For long periods of time we were



EDINBURGH: The Gills boss is impressed with his squad

without Cody McDonald and Doug Loft but we've dealt with that and this group seem to solve the prob-

lems that are put in front of them.

"We succeed and fail together, that's the way it has to be."

Victories over Bradford, Wigan and, perhaps most notably, promotion favourites Sheffield United on the opening day have seen Gillingham emerge as unlikely candidates at the top end of the table after a mid-table finish last campaign.

Edinburgh himself was nominated for the League One Manager of the Month award for August, while midfielder Bradley Dack received a nomination for Player of the Month after finding the net five times in seven games in all competitions.

Edinburgh also confirmed that John Egan is back in full training, and that Brennan Dickenson and Deji Oshilaja are also close to returning to the squad.

Sport Shorts

» Email sports@kosmedia.co.uk or call Jamie Weir on 01233 653481

Dartford golfer scoops Bishops Bowl trophy

A DARTFORD golfer was celebrating this week after emerging victorious as the Wildernes Club, a regional qualifying course for The Open, held its annual Bishops Bowl Tournament this week.

The tournament was a Kent County Golf Union order of merit event, attracting a field of top amateur golfers from across Kent and the south east.

First played in 1930, the 36-hole event is held at the club in Sevenoaks each year and was won on this occasion by regular England representative Michael Saunders of Dartford Golf Club.

Scoring 73 and 68, for a total of 141 (three under par), Saunders narrowly beat Liam Burns of Sundridge Park.

He said afterwards: "The Bishops Bowl tournament is one of the most prestigious events in the Kent golfing calendar.

"It was an honour to win, especially as this is my last tournament as an amateur before I turn professional.

"The course at Wildernes Club is fantastic and I always enjoy playing there."



WINNER: Michael Saunders (left) shows off his trophy



MEAD: The Folkestone kicker played a crucial role in the win over Ashford

Folkestone youngsters impress in Kent Shield

FOLKESTONE coach Leigh Fitchie shuffled his pack as a youthful team came from behind to beat Ashford in the Kent Shield.

With eight of the regular XV taking a day off, Fitchie called on a number of newcomers who caught the eye in an impressive victory.

The Stones put their opponents under immense pressure from the off and took the lead thanks to a James Mead penalty from 35 metres.

Against the run of play, Ashford raced into a 12-3 advantage courtesy of two quick tries and one conversion.

Folkestone responded though, and Adam Tolman raced through to score unopposed before Mead converted on 71 minutes.

Ashford then had a man dismissed for a head-butt, setting up a dramatic last few minutes.

A swift movement using all the backs created a space for Danny Theyers to sprint through and score a try on the right wing at the death.

Mead then converted once more to secure victory for the Stones ahead of their opening league game with Bromley on Saturday.

Ace Quaife reigns in Spain again

KENT'S Phil Quaife has clinched the 24 Hour International Endurance Series A3T class title in Spain.

The Tunbridge Wells driver and his Memac Ogilvy Duel Racing team wrapped up the title with a race to spare last weekend, thanks to their second victory of the season at the Hankook 24 Hours of Barcelona.

The McLaren test and develop-

ment driver set pole position and fastest race lap en route to helping himself and Moutran brothers Nabil, Ramzi and Sami clinch victory.

Quaife, 29, said: "Everyone once again played their part in a fantastic result at Barcelona and it goes without saying that we're all delighted to have wrapped up the class title a race early."

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DRIVE AWAY FOR £8,295

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DRIVE AWAY FOR £8,495

13/13 Plate Ford Fiesta 1.0 Ecoboost Zetec 5dr, in Mustard



DRIVE AWAY FOR £8,995

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DRIVE AWAY FOR £9,995

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